The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

OUTFIT 268
NUMBER 1

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY
Hudson's Bay Company.
INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670.

To
THE KING'S
MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

THE HUMBLE ADDRESS OF THE GOVERNOR AND COMPANY OF ADVENTURERS OF ENGLAND TRADING INTO HUDSON'S BAY.

Most Gracious Sovereign.

WE, Your Majesty's most loyal and obedient Subjects, The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay, beg leave to offer to Your Majesty our humble and sincere congratulations on this the occasion of your Accession to the Throne. It is our earnest desire that Your Majesty and your Royal Consort, our Gracious Queen Elizabeth, may long be spared to reign over us in peace and prosperity. . . . . .

Confident that the happiness of the peoples of your Empire will ever be Your Majesty's especial care, we pray that in the fulfilment of your high office Your Majesty may be sustained by the knowledge of the devoted allegiance of your most loyal Subjects. . . . . .

W. M. Cooper.
Governor

Alex R. Mansan
Deputy Governor

John B. P. Rayleake
Director

F. A. Peacock
Director

December, 1936.

Foreword by Fur Trade Commissioner

ALL issues of the *Beaver* are good, but I am particularly proud of this number, all the articles in which have been contributed by members of our Fur Trade staff. I hope the readers will enjoy the stories, which are told in simple language by ordinary men, dealing with matters which they have encountered and are encountering daily in carrying out their regular duties.

Rightly or wrongly, we are inclined to look on the *Beaver* as predominantly a Fur Trade publication, but sometimes recently I have felt our men were losing their rightful place as the principal contributors. It is very gratifying to me to see the Fur Trade men once more to the fore and I want all Fur Traders to remember that we want more articles for future issues. There is no need to be bashful about the material you contribute. If it is not considered up to scratch it will not be published, and if your story is passed by the editor then the author need have no doubt as to it being worthy.

The feature article in this number is by William Gibson, dealing with the tragic Franklin expedition. No one is better qualified than Mr. Gibson to tell this story, as, besides having made a close study of it, he is the man who is responsible for building up the Company's trade in King William Land and knows that country like a book.

J. W. Anderson's article, "Beaver Sanctuary," tells how the great problem of fur conservation is being met in his district. The "father" of the Rupert's House sanctuary, however, is J. S. C. Watt, whose splendid story of life in the service in Labrador district also appears in this issue.

R. H. G. Bonnycastle tells a good story of how men meet and overcome their difficulties in the Arctic where shipyard and machine shop facilities are non-existent.

R. H. Chesshire describes one of the most important developments in the Fur Trade for a long time: the establishment of our Apprentice Training School in Winnipeg.

Read all these and the stories by John Bartleman, George Anderson, H. M. Ross, and J. R. Patience. They are all interesting. R. N. Hourde's pictures, as usual, are excellent, and our enjoyment of them is tinged with sadness that such a promising young life should have been nipped in the bud.

Ralph Parsons

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Cover from a photograph by the late R. N. Hourde

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Why the Loon Walks Crooked

By J. R. PATIENCE, Superior-Huron District

This story was told by an Indian friend. Nin-a-ba-sou is Cree for Whisky-Jack.

OUR old friend Nin-a-ba-sou was walking beside a beautiful lake one lovely day in the early fall. Many of the water birds were swimming about on the lake, and one of them, seeing Nin-a-ba-sou, and noticing a strange bundle on his back, became very curious. "Nin-a-ba-sou, what is in that bundle you are carrying?" "These are my songs," was the reply. "Would you sing us your songs?" asked the water bird. "I would be very glad to," answered our friend. "But first I must build a suitable wigwam, so that I may be able to entertain all of you. While I am doing so, you hurry away and invite all the birds and ducks to my new wigwam, where we will all dance and sing and have a great feast."

So Nin-a-ba-sou went into the woods to cut down the poles for his wigwam. When he had all that he needed, he gathered some tamarac fibres, which he made into nooses and secreted under his belt. Soon he had his wigwam finished. It was quite large, with a door facing the lake and an opening in the roof.

By this time all the guests were assembled, and Nin-a-ba-sou welcomed them into his new home. The dancing began, and he asked them to dance towards the door with their eyes shut while he entertained them with his songs. This they all obediently did, and as they danced he sang.

Among the guests was an intelligent and curious bird called the Loon. He was very alert to strange noises, and he imagined that, above the slight drumming sound caused by the dancing and the voice of their host, there was unmistakably another sound, as if a bird were choking. To satisfy his curiosity, he opened one of his eyes a little bit, and much to his horror saw Nin-a-ba-sou choking his guests with nooses, one at a time, and leaving them in a heap on the floor. He shouted an alarm, "Nin-a-ba-sou is choking us," and immediately all the birds who were still alive flew up through the opening in the roof of the wigwam to safety.

Mr. Loon himself, who could not rise without a strong wind, ran to the door and made for the lake at full speed. Nin-a-ba-sou, very much vexed at the thwarting of his little scheme, pursued him, determined to vent his wrath on the culprit who had given the alarm. The Loon was just about to enter the lake when his pursuer caught up to him, giving him a kick which knocked him spinning into the lake and sent his legs backward. He exclaimed, "You rascal, I'll get even with you." And he did, because the Loon now walks crooked from the result of this kick by Nin-a-ba-sou.

THE HBC PACKET

IN April, while the Franklin story was being prepared for publication, a letter arrived from Gjoa Haven, King William Land, Eastern Arctic, enclosing two more relics of the Franklin expedition. The letter is from L. A. Learmonth, post manager at Gjoa Haven, and was written on 1st October, 1936:

"I fancy you will be interested to receive enclosed relics of that final attempt of Sir John Franklin's to conquer the North-West Passage, a George IIII half crown and an old time ivory sailor button. They were unearthed by a sharp eyed Eskimo boy called Pootogo close to several of the lost expedition skeletons discovered so recently as August of this year by Mr. D. G. Sturrock and myself near Tiker-an-i-you (crooked finger), a point of land fifteen miles or thereabout west of Starvation Cove on Adelaide Peninsula, and which thoroughly deserves its name both from its shape and in the rather sinister sense of its belonging to the evil untimely hand of a fate which reached out and destroyed every man of the expedition. Anyway it would seem that at least half of the personnel must have perished on it, or at intervals along the fearfully desolate sea coast, and even more desolate islands lying close inshore immediately to the east and west of it.

"Owing to the failure of the Western Arctic Transport to get through to King William Land during the past season the proper establishment of Fort Ross has had to be postponed until next year. But this failure will not, I hope, prevent me keeping my promise to obtain for you the first photographs ever taken of the extreme northern tip of this continent, and of Bellot Strait, though you will have to wait a little longer than you might have had to."

Another letter from King William Land is of unusual interest and we quote at length from it because it recounts a world of absorbing hobby interest and tells something of the changing way of life in the not-so-remote North.

"Being an apprentice in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company and also operator of their wireless station CZ2L, for which my own amateur call letters are VE5LD, I take liberty in writing to you.

"In May 1934, before I came north, I was kept busy night and day building this station, with the able assistance of Mr. C. Hitchon, a Winnipeg amateur and radio service man, for the Hudson's Bay Company. Neither of us knew anything of radio conditions in the Arctic, but the station had to be inexpensive, of low power operated by "B" batteries and efficient. Since that time CZ2L-VE5LD has been kept in almost continuous operation, and the results obtained have far surpassed our wildest expectations.

"During the summer of 1934 at Tuktoyaktuk, and while that post was being built, the station was making daily contacts with the R. C. C. S. station at Aklavik and messages were handled daily. From Tuktoyaktuk VE5LD was in two-way communication with VK2XU Australia, J2HI Japan, W10XDA the Morrissey schooner then in Melville Bay, Greenland, and also Mr. C. Hitchon, VE4AE Winnipeg, besides a few other Canadian and also American amateur stations. VGSR, the R. C. M. Police boat *St. Roch*, was kept in touch with on her way from Herschel Island to Coppermine and back to Herschel on her voyage out to Vancouver.

"In the fall of 1934 I was sent to Cambridge Bay on the Company's schooner *Fort James* and was at Cambridge Bay one year, during which time a bi-weekly schedule was kept with the Canadian Government radio station VBK at Coppermine, and the settlements 'traffic' was handled without charge. A weekly schedule was also kept up during the winter with VE5MA. The Roman Catholic mission boat *Our Lady of Lourdes* then wintering at Letty Harbour, and also VE5OA at Camsell River, Aklavik were also 'worked'. My greatest thrill from radio at Cambridge Bay was from a chat one evening with D4BAR in Germany. A few American and Canadian radio amateurs were also 'worked,' and Winnipeg was contacted five times.

"August 1935 found me aboard the Company's schooner *Aklavik* on my way to King William Island —that spot on the map which is the scene of the greatest tragedy in Arctic history. Here again the antenna for CZ2L and VE5LD was raised and signals were flashed out from these same shores where, less than a century ago, Sir John Franklin's party began their fateful march.

"Here at Gjoa Haven, as at previous posts, I find but little time to 'go on the air' and am seldom on the 'amateur bands.' A bi-weekly schedule with VBK at Coppermine and VGSR, the *St Roch*, now wintering at Cambridge Bay, is however observed. Last year I managed to contact G16YW in Belfast, Ireland, and was able to send a short message from the Inspector H B C, W.A. Dist., to his father, who lives fifty miles from Belfast. I have since received a card from G16-YW and he assures me that the Inspector's message was delivered. Since that time VE5LD has been in two-way communication with three radio amateurs in France (F8KE, F8FK near Meuzen, and F3AD near Nantes) besides several on this Continent.

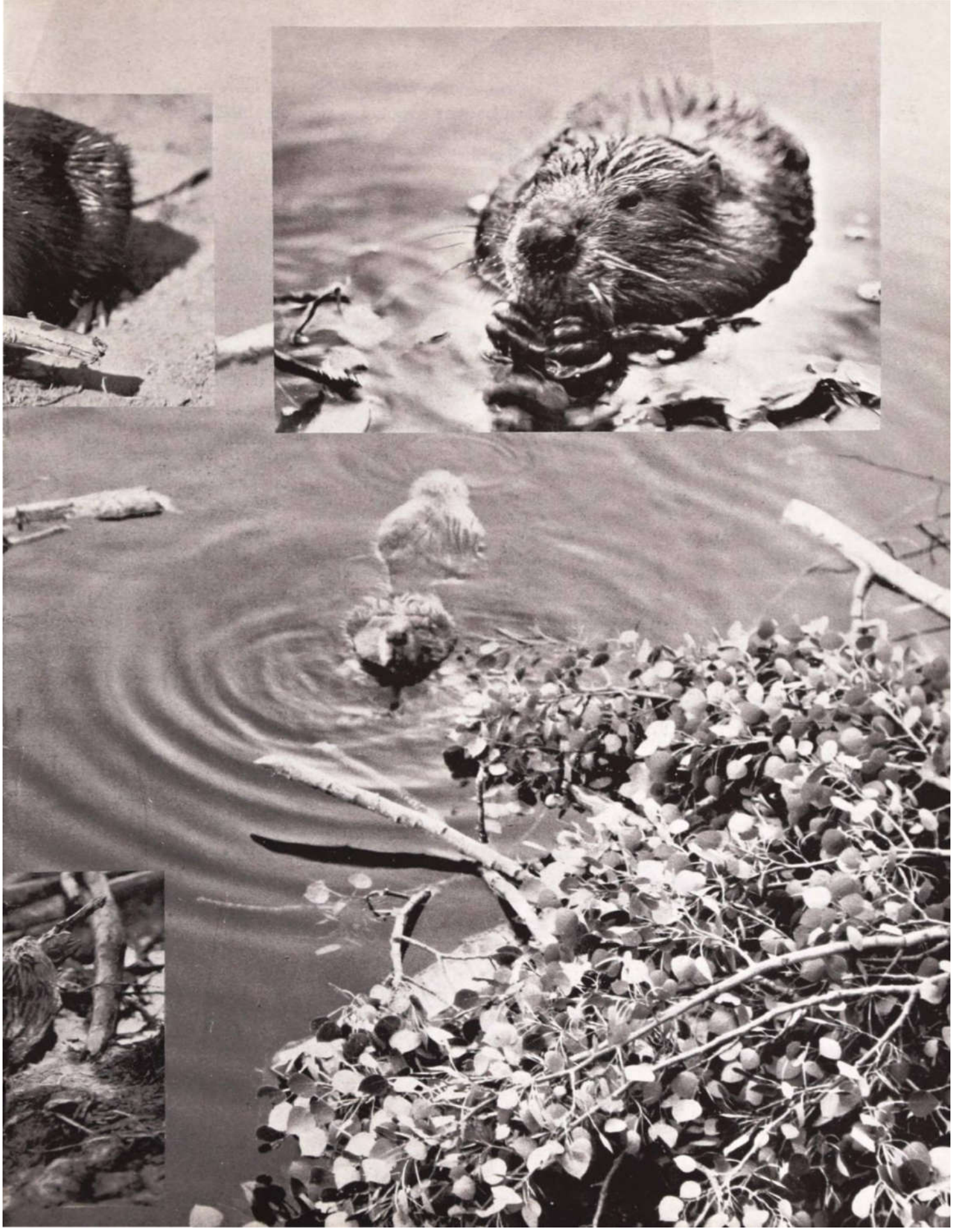
"It is interesting to note that VGSR and CZ2L have played two games of chess over the air this year. Hoping to hear from you at your convenience, Yours faithfully, D. G. STURROCK."

"The Northland is thus peculiarly Canadian. . . . . The effect of the North on the Canadian individuality is noteworthy. Its importance lies less in its economic value than in what one may term its mystic appeal. Many countries—and they are to be envied—possess in one direction or another a window which opens out on to the infinite—on to the potential future. The open sky thus becomes part of their frontier, and to them it acquires a symbolical, almost a spiritual significance. . . . In South Africa, in the heroic days of Cecil Rhodes, it was the North. . . . . In Canada the frontier which abounds in poetry and latent hopes is less in the West, as in the United States, than in the Northwest, or simply the North. Yet the North is always there like a presence; it is the background of the picture without which Canada would not be Canada." —Canada, by Andre Siegfried (Jonathon Cape London, 1937.)

Beaver Sanctuary

By J. W. ANDERSON
James Bay District

Photos by the Department of Mines and Natural Resources



THE Company's first modern beaver sanctuary was established at Rupert's House on James Bay in 1931. The Charlton Island sanctuary, which was originally established by the Company in 1851, was reopened in 1934 by the Federal Government in co-operation with the Hudson's Bay Company. The third and most recent conservation scheme is a sanctuary at Agamiski Island, started in 1935.

WHEN the *Nonsuch* wintered at Rupert's House, or Fort Charles as it was then called, in 1668-69, it returned to London in the following year loaded to capacity with furs, consisting mostly of beaver skins. At one time the beaver inhabited the greater portion of the North American continent, and in the early days of the fur trade it was the staple article of barter and exchange. The advance of civilization, the extension of trapping activities on a commercial basis by both whites and Indians, and the opening up of the country for farming, mining and fishery activities have all tended to deplete the supply of this very staple fur animal.

It is a curious fact that, while beaver respond readily to conservation methods, it is also one of the fur bearers easiest to exterminate by too intensive trapping. Although the beaver have never been so scarce as at the present, nevertheless throughout its vast territories the Hudson's Bay Company has experienced periods of scarcity in the past, and it is on record that at the Council of Rupert's Land just one hundred years ago the following resolution was adopted by the Fur Trade executives of that date:

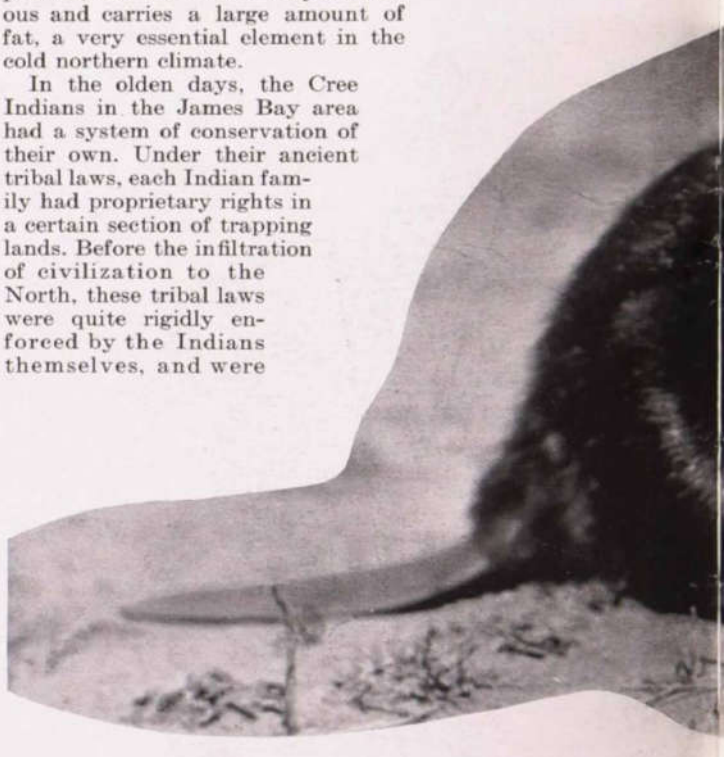
"That all Gentlemen in charge of Districts and Posts, except such as are exposed to opposition, exert their utmost influence in discouraging the hunting of Cub Beaver and of Beaver out of season, and that no Beaver traps or springs be issued from the Depot of York, except for sale to the Piegan Indians, or those hunting foxes on the coast; and from the Depot of Moose only for Lake Huron District, the Posts along Lake Superior, and to the Indians who hunt foxes on the Bay side; and that in any case where an unusual proportion of cub or unseasoned Beaver appears, the same to be particularly represented by the Gentlemen superintending the Fur Stores, to the Governor and Council, for the information of the Honourable Committee."

In our own time, however, the principal cause of the present scarcity of beaver has been intensive trapping following boom prices in the period 1922-1929. During this time not only were white trappers pressing farther and farther north, but the native Indians were susceptible to inflationary influences just as were the white men. Urged on by the lure of ever advancing prices, they felt compelled to extend and increase their trapping activities, and the cumulative effect of this was the greatly depleted natural supply of beaver. While this phenomenon in the past decade has given us much concern, calm reflection leads us to consider that we should be in no way surprised. After all, natural resources of any kind do not last indefinitely. Take, for instance, land, fisheries and lumber resources. These are all subject to more or less rapid depletion, and while the supply of raw furs is in a somewhat different category, nevertheless they, too, are subject to depletion in the course of centuries. The supply of raw furs has probably held up better under commercial exploitation than any other of our natural resources, but inevitably there comes a time when conservation has to receive serious thought and consideration.

Now, while fur farming of foxes and some other fur animals is probably an eminently feasible commercial possibility, the beaver, we think, is not susceptible to intensive fur farming methods. The best scientific information gathered in the United States indicates that it takes one acre of land to support one beaver, and in our own experience we know that a relatively small beaver colony will destroy a tremendous amount of timber and willows in the process of procuring food.

Rupert's House post, at the southern end of James Bay, witnessed the birth of the Company's fur trade in Canada, and the trade in that area always depended more on the beaver than on any other class of fur. It was here that the growing scarcity was very severely felt, for we have to keep in mind that not only does the beaver provide the native with a cash income, but it also supplies a large portion of his meat diet. The carcass of a large beaver will weigh from forty to fifty pounds, and the flesh is very nutritious and carries a large amount of fat, a very essential element in the cold northern climate.

In the olden days, the Cree Indians in the James Bay area had a system of conservation of their own. Under their ancient tribal laws, each Indian family had proprietary rights in a certain section of trapping lands. Before the infiltration of civilization to the North, these tribal laws were quite rigidly enforced by the Indians themselves, and were



highly effective as a means of conserving wild life, particularly the beaver.

The Indian of those days was different from his white brother; his wants were not extensive and much of his time was occupied hunting meat. He was not in active competition with white trappers and his trapping activities were pursued with only a fraction of the intensity practised by white men or even Indians today. All these conditions naturally operated to conserve fur bearing animals. The primitive Indian family took a vital interest in the beaver colonies on their trapping lands, and it was natural and easy for them, as well as very beneficial, to conserve the supply, so as to furnish a regular income and a regular food supply over the years. The Hudson's Bay Company, in its experience of northern fur trade, knows very well how efficiently this system worked under primitive conditions, and how it not only meant an equitable distribution of food and cash income for the native, but it meant relatively steady returns for the trading post year after year. Most other furs, and particularly foxes and musquash, are subject to quite wide fluctuations, due to cyclic periods of abundance and scarcity. But with the Indian system of beaver conservation enforced, the result was that no matter to what extent other furs might fluctuate, the Indian could always depend on a comparatively steady supply of beaver. And we all know the great benefit resulting from a steady income, whether it be for an Indian family, a white family, a business organization, a province or a nation.

The northward march of civilization, and particularly the activities of the white trapper, gradually disintegrated the Indian trapping lands system. As the old tribal laws lost their effectiveness and the Indian gradually lost control of his tribal lands, he naturally tended, like the white trapper, to kill everything in sight, because if he did not, some other trapper would. In other words, great stretches of ideal beaver country became the scene of a free-for-all exploitation. As already mentioned, this depletion reached a climax in the years 1922-1929, and when it was all over the red man, although not given very much to foresight, had perforce to take stock of the beaver resources of the country.

This, therefore, was the situation which confronted the Company, and it came to a head, not in a period of prosperity when the financing of conservation schemes are easily undertaken, but in the depths of the depression, when it was incumbent on all business organizations to conserve their resources to the utmost. Nevertheless, the Company had in its organization officers who saw the need and the opportunity. The Indians, too, could see the writing on the wall, and were quite concerned, not only for their own future welfare, but for the welfare of their descendants. And so beaver conservation was undertaken in the North, not as a form of intensive fur farming, but as a project adapted essentially to the needs and requirements of the native Indians.

The game departments of the various provincial governments, and also of the Department of the Northwest Territories were also greatly exercised over the rapid decrease in the production of beaver skins and took various measures to cope with the situation; some in the direction of restricting white trappers, and others the total prohibition of beaver trapping. It was through the co-operation of the government of the province of Quebec that the Company's first modern beaver sanctuary was established. This comprises an area of seven thousand square miles, the territory being bounded on the south by the Rupert river and on the north by the East Main river, and extending inland for over one hundred miles. This is the largest, most ambitious, and most expensive of the Company's conservation plans. It has been in operation now for four years, and while nothing spectacular has happened, it is nevertheless developing according to plan. It is, of course, organized along lines to suit the needs of the undeveloped Indian territory, the Company being under contractual obligation with the government of the province of Quebec for the employment as game guardians of those Indians who formerly trapped on the sanctuary. Some fifteen families of Indians are maintained and paid by the Company as game guardians, and ordinarily every summer eight to ten survey parties of Indians are sent out to make the annual check-up on the number of beaver lodges on the sanctuary. In addition to all this, the manager of the sanctuary also makes an extensive summer survey checking up the work of these Indian game guardians. Apart from their summer survey work, for which they receive supplementary remuneration, the Indian game guardians are only required to exercise a cautionary supervision over the beaver, to see that strange Indians do not poach on the sanctuary, and also to be continually on the alert to prevent forest fires. These duties, of course, are purely of a nominal nature, because actually their remuneration as beaver guardians is intended to compensate them for their prohibited rights in the trapping of beaver.

As time goes on and the Indians can see the results of conservation, they are becoming quite keenly interested. Continued efforts are being made to have them think along the lines of conservation, and their in-

Beaver food—water lilies so thick that paddling is difficult.

creasing interest is very gratifying, promising well for the future. As evidence of their interest they prepare maps showing the locations of the beaver lodges, they do a certain amount of reckoning and estimating as to the increase of beaver, and in a general way they are looking forward to the very substantial benefits which will accrue to them when, in the course of a few years, it will be possible to commence pelting beaver.

It is a well known fact that most wild animals quickly get to know when they are in sanctuary, and the Indians rapidly took notice of this fact, for the very summer after the Rupert's House sanctuary had been set aside they observed that the few beaver left therein already seemed to know they were safe from harm and danger. In some sections of the sanctuary the beaver have become quite numerous, and the Indian game guardians take great delight in watching them frolic in the water on the pleasant summer evenings. Although patrol or survey parties are sent out every summer and a reasonably accurate count is made, we must nevertheless realize that in such an extent of territory it would be impossible to explore all the creeks and rivers where beaver might be located. For this reason we can always take it for granted that there are at least from ten to fifteen percent more beaver than is actually recorded by these summer surveys, while the Indians tell us, too, that there is always a certain migratory beaver population not located in lodges, and which escapes count. It is therefore gratifying to observe that even on this conservative basis the increase, while not spectacular, is nevertheless proceeding steadily and according to estimates prepared when the sanctuary was first opened.

Next in importance as a conservation measure comes the Charlton Island beaver sanctuary, which, although revived in 1934, was nevertheless the first fur farm in Canada, having been established by the Hudson's Bay Company in the year 1851. In that year a number of beaver were placed on the island, and according to the records they throve rapidly so that in three or four years' time the officer in charge at Rupert's House sent out several families of Indians to trap off the surplus beaver. The plan in those days was to leave the beaver on Charlton Island undisturbed for two or three years and then to send out a limited number of Indian families who would trap the beaver in February or March, remain on the island until summer, and be transported back to Rupert's House by the Company's boats during the summer season of navigation. The beaver farm on Charlton Island continued on this basis for quite a number of years, until about the commencement of the present century, when with the opening up of the country and the advancement of competition the Company lost their control and authority over the sanctuary and the natives, with the result that Charlton Island was opened up to all and

Trees cut down by the sharp teeth of the beaver.

sundry for unrestricted trapping, and the beaver were rapidly killed off. In its present status the Charlton Island beaver sanctuary has been reopened under the authority of the federal department administering the Northwest Territories, and is primarily a conservation measure for the preservation and production of the only form of natural wealth suitable to the island, namely the beaver. In 1934 some twenty breeding beaver were purchased from southern Ontario and placed on Charlton Island. Shades of Prince Rupert! What would the traders of bygone days think of the importation of beaver *into* James Bay, the very cradle of the Company's fur trade in Canada? This shows probably more forcibly than anything else could just how close the beaver were to extinction. The imported beaver, together with the few of the original stock remaining on Charlton Island, have now started to increase at a fair rate, and while the total beaver population is still very small, it is nevertheless progressing as favourably as could be expected.

The third and most recent conservation scheme is a beaver sanctuary on Agamiski Island, on the west coast of James Bay off the mouth of the Attawapiskat river. This, again is operated in agreement with the Dominion government, and was only commenced in

the summer of 1935, when some eight beaver were placed thereon. In 1936 a further fourteen beaver were placed on the island and, while this sanctuary is really only commencing, it is pleasing to know that the beaver are settling down and building lodges on the island, and that the one and only pair of adult beaver planted in 1935 have already produced a litter of young. Agamiski sanctuary is somewhat different from the others in as much as it is hoped when the beaver increase to a sufficient number that the Company will be able to restock some of the rivers on the west coast of James Bay where formerly beaver abounded and have now become extinct. Astounding as it may seem, it is nevertheless a fact that some of the present generation of Attawapiskat Indians have actually never seen beaver. This was particularly noticeable when the first shipment of beaver to Agamiski was sent north in 1935. They were landed at Attawapiskat post from the supply schooner for trans-shipment to Agamiski Island, and the post manager had to keep the beaver at the post for a few days. In the interval they were literally mobbed by the Indians, who manifested the greatest interest and curiosity in seeing beaver in captivity. The beaver in question were secured at Rupert's House post, not from the sanctuary, but purchased direct from Indians on the south side of the river and under permit from the Quebec government.

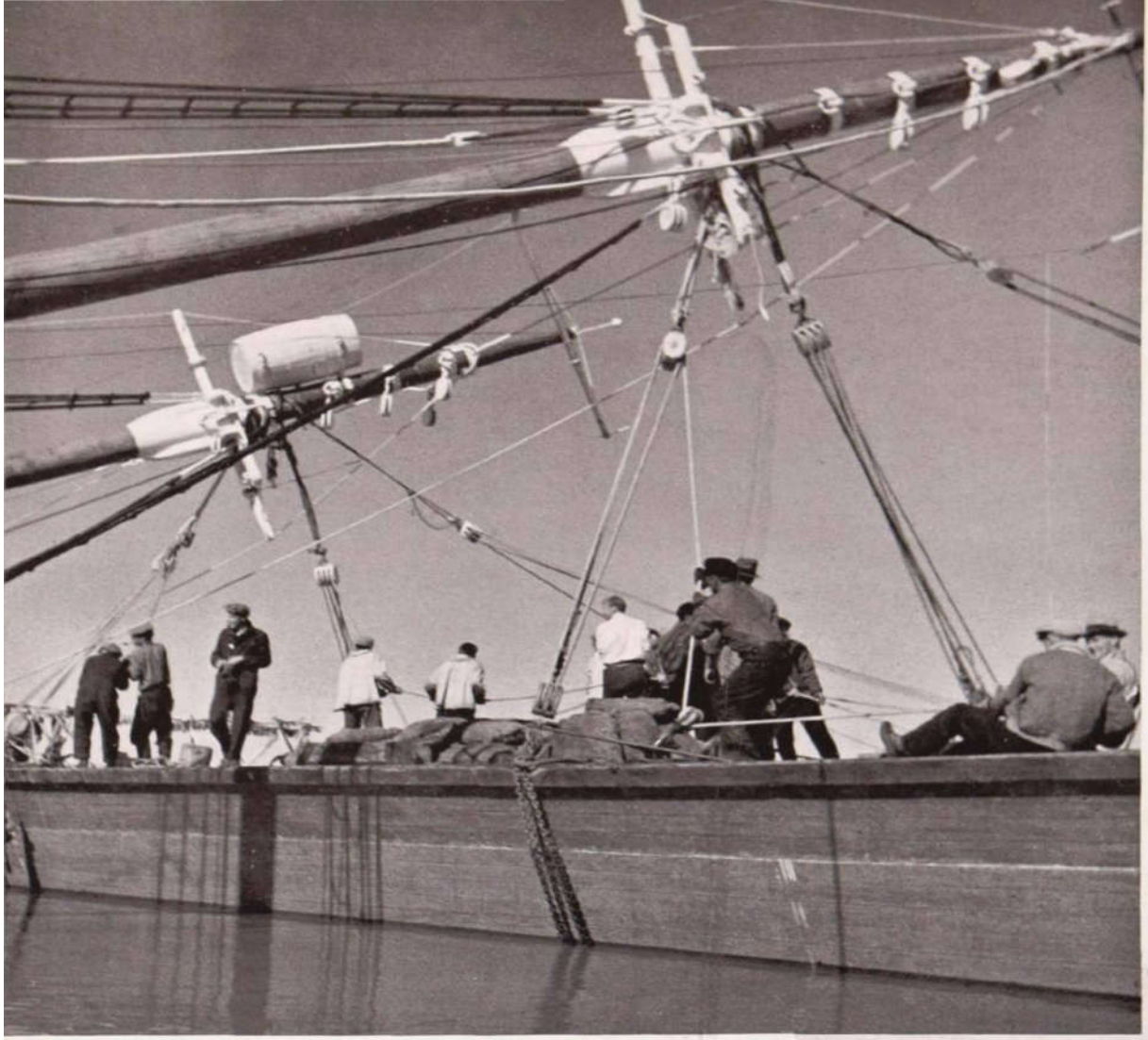
Caretakers of the sanctuary at a beaver dam.

In taking beaver alive, special traps are used so as not to harm the animals in any way. They are brought to Rupert's House post in the month of April, and cared for by the post manager till such time as they can go forward to their ultimate destination by the first trip of the supply schooner in June. A great deal of work and care is expended in tending the beaver during the time they are at Rupert's House. In fact it was found to be such a big task that the sanctuary manager has erected a special man-made beaver lodge. This has been constructed by lining a portion of the banks of a creek with concrete, dividing it off into sections so as to make suitable sized beaver pens, and erecting a suitable building over the whole. Water in abundance is the essential requirement for beaver in captivity, and this is secured by damming the creek. Then, by periodically opening a sluice gate, the foul water and debris are drained away. Food for the captive beaver also involves a considerable amount of work, and it is surprising the pile of willows and young trees which a few pairs of beaver can consume in the course of a day.

It will thus be seen that beaver conservation as it is practised in James Bay district is quite a big business involving no little expense and endeavour. It is primarily intended to rehabilitate the beaver country and provide the natives with a steady income, in other words to bring prosperity into the north country. Great stretches of the northland are unsuited for any other kind of natural wealth, and it would be a pity if no effort were made to conserve wild life, and particularly beaver, which are not only a source of cash income for the natives and royalties for the government, but a valuable food supply. Government officials, missionaries, police and trappers, in fact all who are interested in and have knowledge of the North, fully realize the need for conservation and the adoption of measures to augment the livelihood of the natives. Fur farming as practised in civilized parts is not suitable for the unorganized Indian territory, but the Company considers that beaver conservation such as is now being tried out can be and should be adapted to the needs of the Indian, thus stimulating the production of natural wealth in large areas of the northland. Whenever we can increase the production of natural wealth, we not only benefit ourselves but every resident in our country.

Close-up of a beaver lodge.

Beaver conservation as inaugurated by the Hudson's Bay Company is really only in its experimental stages, but the progress thus far achieved encourages us to think that, while nothing spectacular may happen, it may be the means of restoring the humble beaver in large areas now denuded but where it formerly abounded; of conserving and developing natural wealth in large sections of the country unsuited for other purposes; and last but not least, of perpetuating the fur trade of old. We may or may not succeed, but nevertheless, as many times in the past, the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay are again pioneering in the North.



PICTURE a fine vessel lying full of water, engines and quarters completely submerged, decks awash, and the slime of oil from broken tanks everywhere. This makes a sad picture at any time, but it was a particularly grievous matter for us when we learnt last spring that this was the condition of our Western Arctic distributing vessel, the gallant auxiliary schooner *Fort James*. Thus she lay at Tuktuk on the coast near the mouth of the Mackenzie river, four thousand miles from a dry-dock, with the Western Arctic posts dependent on her for delivery of their annual supplies before the short season of navigation should pass into another winter.

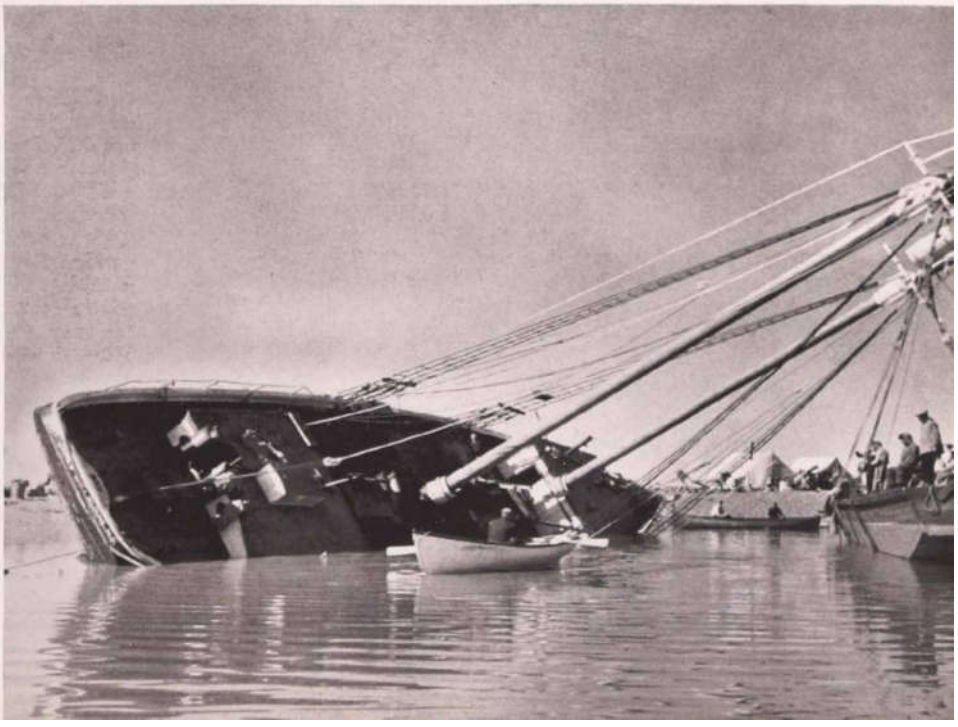
First warning of the impending disaster came by wireless from L. G. White, chief engineer of the ship and post manager at Tuktuk. He tapped out the following message in code over his small radio outfit to the government station at Aklavik, whence it was rushed to Winnipeg: "*Fort James* crushed abaft mainmast. Believe fatal. Not leaking as no thaw in harbour yet. Would suggest landing everything as will likely sink during break-up."

At the close of navigation in 1935 the *Fort James* had been securely anchored out in an open stretch of deep water within the land-locked harbour of Tuktuk, where it was felt she would be as safe throughout the long winter with its heavy ice as if tied to the wharf in Vancouver. But you never can tell with ice, and evidently along towards spring the rise and fall of the tide during a gale at sea brought about some

Salvage by the Midnight Sun

By
R. H. G. BONNYCASTLE
Fur Trade Commissioner's Office

The "Fort James," a Company schooner, was "nipped" in the ice at Tuktuk, on the Western Arctic coast, 4000 miles from the nearest dry-dock. Supplies had to go to the posts, so by man power alone she was hauled down, an open seam caulked, made ship-shape and the work completed in time to get her job finished before freeze up.



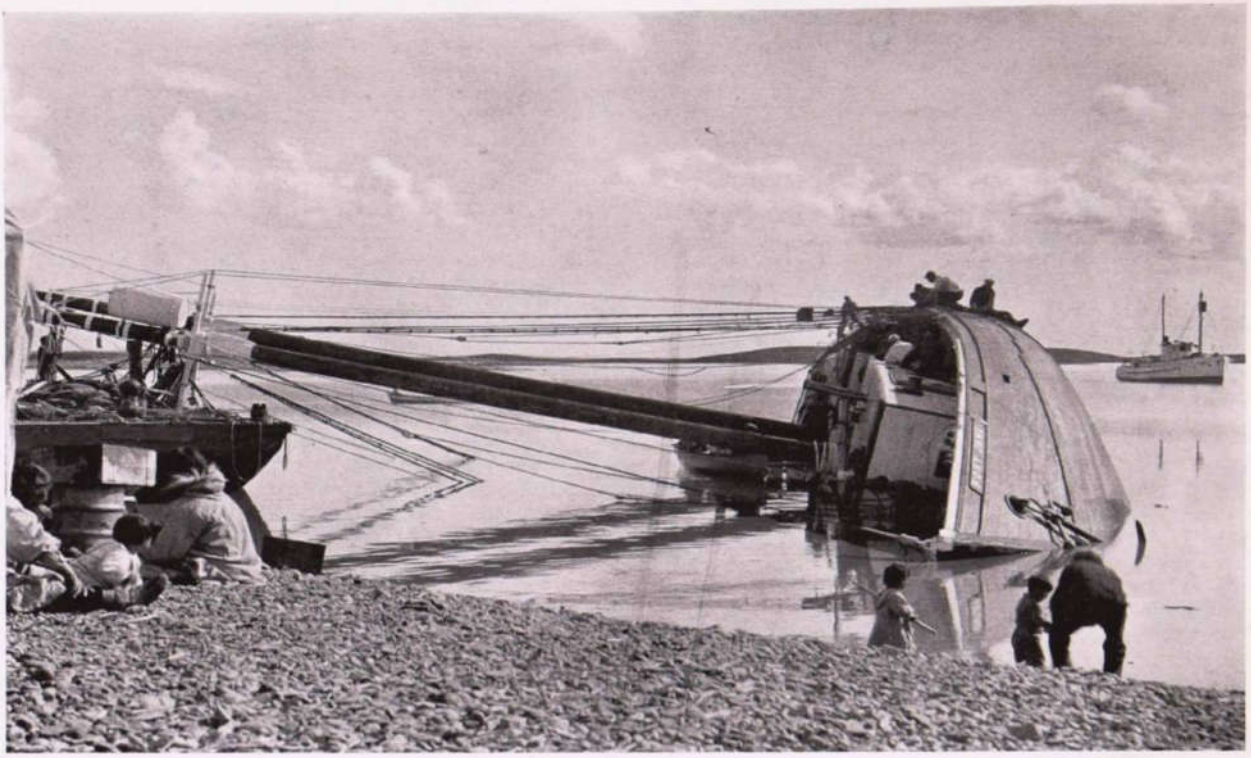
Upper left: The tackles are rigged from the masts of the "Fort James" to a barge.

Left: The capstan in operation on the beach.

Above: Company men and Eskimos, working in unison, heave on the tackles that slowly but surely bring the masts down to the water.

Above right: This photograph, taken at midnight, shows something of the activity that was carried on into the early hours of the morning.

Right: The "Fort James," listing at fifty degrees, on her way over.



"The 'James' lay like a great stranded whale."

movement in the frozen harbour, which had this disastrous effect on the ship.

We were in a bad spot. Five hundred tons of supplies for the Arctic posts were already commencing to move northward down the Mackenzie, and here was a vital arm of the transport incapacitated. The supplies would not be of much help delivered at Tuktuk without the *Fort James* to move them out to the isolated posts along the thousand-mile coast line. True, there were other boats which could be pressed into service, but it was essential to get the *James* in operation if we were to complete deliveries satisfactorily. There was neither salvage equipment available nor a big rise and fall of tide which could be used to beach the ship and work on her hull. She was much too heavy to haul out on dry land for repairs without an elaborate slipway, which could not be provided in time, and how to get at her hull, extending ten feet below the surface, even to ascertain the extent of the damage, was a problem. The outlook was black indeed.

Before we go any further, let us remind you that the *Fort James* is a two-masted auxiliary schooner 100 feet long, 24 feet beam and 8¾ feet deep, her mainmast 75 feet high, typical Lunenburg Banker—a beautiful model. Originally built in Shelburne, N.S., for use in Hudson Bay, she has plied those waters, the Labrador coast and Eastern Arctic, including negotiation of the famous Northwest Passage from Newfoundland to King William Land and back. In 1934 it was decided to transfer her to the Western Arctic via the Panama Canal, Vancouver, Bering Strait and Herschel Island, a one-way voyage of twelve thousand miles, and a remarkable distance for so small a craft. She was successful in that voyage and before the end of the summer had delivered supplies from the West to Cambridge Bay, on Victoria Land, only two hundred miles from the point on King William Land which she had reached from the east but, by the roundabout route she had come, almost sixteen thousand miles, virtually the entire circumference of the North American continent.

In 1935 the *Fort James* did fine work, delivered cargo to all Western Arctic posts from Tuktuk, steaming four thousand five hundred miles within the Arctic during the short open season. After this ideal performance we were full of hope for season 1936. So, great was our shock to get this wireless message. We received later advice, just when we were preparing to leave Edmonton for the two thousand mile journey to join her, that she had filled with water at the first thaw and was only kept from going to the bottom by the ice which still surrounded her and two hundred empty barrels which Chief Engineer L. G. White had resourcefully stowed in her hold. We hoped against hope that when the ice finally left her the leak would take up sufficiently to permit us to control the water and somehow effect repairs sufficient for our season's work, and we proceeded on our journey north by rail and river steamer. On June 17 a Canadian Airways plane piloted by Rudy Heuss dropped on the surface of the Slave river beside the S.S. *Distributor*, bringing urgent wireless messages that the situation was getting worse and instructing us to proceed at once to Tuktuk and commence salvage operations.

Accordingly Captain R. J. Summers, Carpenter-Shipwright George W. McLeod, Able Seaman William Starkes and the writer boarded the plane and flew the thousand miles to Aklavik, arriving at 3 a.m. next day. It was so hot while flying down the Mackenzie that we were obliged to lie up at Fort Norman until the heat of the day passed and to continue by the light of the midnight sun. We were not troubled by the heat again, for the next day we reached Tuktuk on the Arctic Coast and were walking over the still solid ice in the harbour to inspect our "Jonah."

The *James* was a sorry sight. While the ice was solid all about, though honeycombing badly, it had melted and broken around her sides and she lay very low with decks awash, a port list and stripped of all movable gear, which White had removed in case she sank. Everywhere were pools of brown Diesel oil from her tanks. It was heart-breaking for anyone who loves a ship. White had put in an anxious time, with no one to share his responsibility, watching the ship day by day, as the thaw came, filling with water in spite of his untiring efforts at the pumps, aided by the local Eskimos. There was little we could do immediately. Pumping had availed nothing, and we could not move her until the ice left the harbour. There was still hope that her timbers would gradually resume their position and that another spell of pumping in a couple of days might bring the water under control so that we could ascertain exactly the extent and location of the damage and possibly make her seaworthy once more.

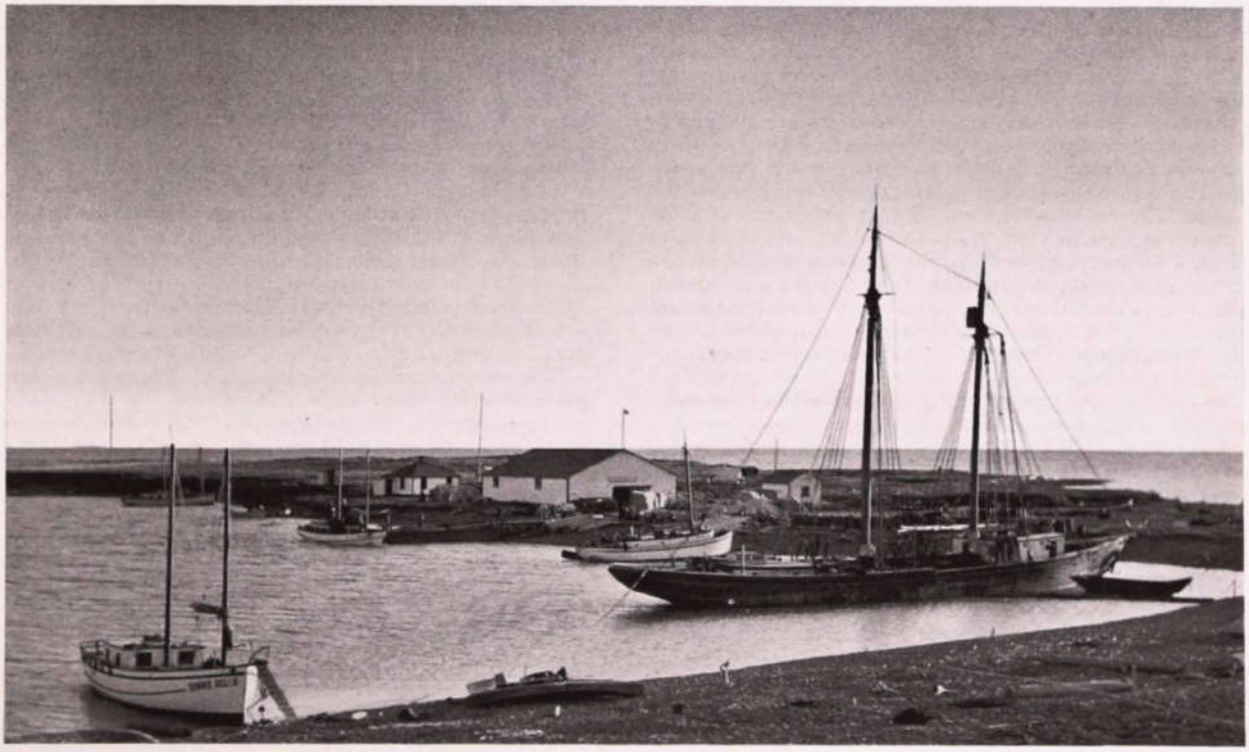
On June 24 we mustered thirteen natives plus our own party of seven and proceeded across the ice to the boat to try and beat the water. We manned the two big deck pumps, a power pump throwing a two-inch stream, and four bailers. Shifts were arranged—fifteen minutes on and fifteen off. Now, when a boat one hundred feet long is full of water there is a lot of water in her, but twenty men pumping and bailing in fifteen-minute shifts can also accomplish quite a bit. We buckled down and kept pumps and buckets going unceasingly for five hours. In the first two hours we took the water down ten inches, but after that made no further impression. The water was coming in as fast as we were taking it out. We were getting nowhere, so had to quit. Our next hope was to get further pumps and draw a tarpaulin under the ship, which might help to stop what we knew now must be a very serious leak.

George McLeod, who can build anything, got busy and made two wooden suction pumps which threw a big stream, and on July 8, when the ice had disappeared from the harbour and the rest of our staff had arrived with a big diaphragm pump from the *Distributor*, we again tackled the pumping. This time we had five hand pumps and one power pump, and there were twenty-four of us, which meant twelve pumping and twelve resting in the usual quarter-hour spells. When we gave the signal to start we knew it was now or never, and prepared for a long, hard grind.

It *was* a tough struggle, and before we ceased work eleven long hours later, during which those pumps never missed a stroke, it was not only the Eskimos who began to wish the ice had done a thorough job in the first place. But to our great joy the water inside went slowly but steadily down and down, and the old *Fort James* rose up and up until she began to look like a ship again instead of a water-logged wreck. Still pumping, we brought two Eskimo schooners alongside and towed her in against the beach until she grounded. We then called it a day, as resting on the bottom we knew she could not sink or even fill to the same level, and the men were ready to drop after one of the hardest days of gruelling labour I ever remember. But our hopes were high.

The next day we had a big start. There was not nearly the same water to contend with. This time we pumped ten hours and practically emptied her. The

Seaworthy again, and ready for action.



engine room dry, we had the use of another power pump there and this, with our force pump on deck, now gave us control of the water without the hand pumps so long as the engineers kept the engines throwing out their streams twenty-four hours a day.

At last we had a chance to look for the source of the trouble and consider means of stopping it. George McLeod probed around in the bottom of the ship. We heaved out old rock ballast that had been put in years before in Newfoundland, wondering if geologists might not wonder years hence how such rock became mingled with the type native to Tuktuk. Holes were bored in the lining, tanks and bulkheads moved; we stopped the pumps and felt and listened, but always the water rose rapidly without any indication as to the exact spot it entered. The *James* was very heavily built, heavy oak frames close together, a four-inch oak lining, spaces between the frames filled with concrete. It was impossible to do anything from the inside, and in the meantime the pumps threw their never ending stream day and night. The only remedy now was to heave her down and get at the bottom from outside.

"Heaving down" is an operation not uncommon in Newfoundland with similar vessels. It consists of hauling the ship over on her side in the water until she is floating on her beam ends with masts horizontal and decks vertical. The hull floats in this position and the bottom is exposed on one side right down to the keel. But in Newfoundland they usually have a solid dock to which the mastheads are drawn down and on which the necessary purchase can be obtained. We had no solid dock, but fortunately secured a flush-decked barge from the Mackenzie river, which answered fairly well after two heart-breaking attempts to heave down to a small lighter had ended in miserable failure.

Four tackles were run from the heads of the two masts to the barge alongside and two to "deadmen" or anchors ashore. The ship was placed in a narrow bight with land on both sides of her but plenty of water to float. Lines were run from each mast at the deck over the side and underneath the keel, then passed to a capstan on the opposite shore. The last jobs were to shore up the heavy engine, which would otherwise fall off its bed when the ship came over, and shore off the masts at the foot to help withstand the strain to be placed on the mast-heads. Deck openings which would be submerged were covered with canvas. We were now ready for our final effort to save the ship. The power pumps still ran night and day.

The whole population was mustered to heave on the lines. The capstan was manned on the beach and fifteen men heaved on the four tackles leading to the barge, taking each in turn, while others hauled on the lines leading to the deadmen. Something had to come, and the *James* hadn't a chance. Over and over she came. Her starboard rail entered the water. Still we heaved and down the masts crawled, the water creeping up the deck towards the hatches. We kept adjusting the pump engines to an even keel as the ship went over.

At first it was an unbelievably heavy pull. No one who saw it could ever be afraid she would roll over at sea. At last we got her over to seventy degrees and then she began to come more easily, until at eighty degrees she just hung in the balance and one man alone could almost move the masts up and down. Yet we had to bring her down still further, which necessitated great care as, once past the point of balance, the whole weight would bear down instead of up and a fall or jar might snap the masts and ruin everything. Gingerly we drew the mastheads down by hand, took the weight and lowered them with jacks until the cross-trees rested on the barge. The Eskimos, seeing the weight come past the centre of gravity, shook their heads and prophesied she would never rise again.

The *James* lay like a great stranded whale, her rudder and propeller exposed, as well as one whole side right down to the keel, which was just awash, masts horizontal so that you could run along them. And the pumps continued with the leaking increased by water trickling in odd places in the submerged portion of the topsides which were normally above water and which we could not stop completely.

A hasty examination showed an open seam half an inch wide by thirty feet long between keel and garboard (the next plank to the keel), the hull otherwise sound as a bell. George McLeod was soon busy with oakum and pitch, and the crack was temporarily stopped. The mastheads were then jacked up from the barge and hoisted a few feet with a gin pole until the ship took her own weight, when we slacked off on our tackles and she slowly rose to an even keel. The water she had gained during the operation was pumped out, and after nineteen hours hard labour we found the leak stopped and the battle won for the time being, with the ship in no immediate danger. The Eskimos were wrong: she was not *mucky* (dead) after all.

But, while the leaking had now ceased, the vessel was not considered seaworthy, as if loaded and sent to sea she might very well reopen the seam in a storm and sink at once. McLeod decided that cross timbers should be laid thwartships on the keelson, fastened to frames and bolted through the keel, which would make her right as rain. We immediately set about finding timber and iron for the job, but not until August 19 were we ready to commence the final repairs.

By then seven timbers (12x12 ins.) had been fitted thwartships in the hold and fastened down with drift bolts. Holes were bored down through these timbers, through keelson, frames and almost through the keel. Bolts sixty inches long were made. We were ready to heave down again, this time for final repairs. But unfortunately our Mackenzie river barge had gone on its business. We were left with our pitifully small lighter. With our previous experience, however, we got the ship down again without particular difficulty, starting our pumps when she was over to throw out the water which came in as usual through the topsides.

Working on a raft alongside the keel, which was now just out of water, McLeod permanently recaulked and pitched the bad seam. The holes which had previously been bored almost through the keel were completed, the long bolts were driven in from the outside with a sledge until the threaded ends just protruded into the hold. These were capped with nuts and washers. The repairs were finished.

But now came another struggle. The pumps had given trouble and stopped intermittently. The water running into the hull had gained rapidly while we were at work in spite of efforts made to bail while fixing them. When we came to lift the masts we found them terribly heavy, due to this water in the hull, and only to be jacked up with the very greatest difficulty. We had jacked and blocked them up six feet when our little lighter shifted and down they came with a dangerous thud, giving us a very nasty scare, and it looked as if we might lose her after all in the very hour of success. There was genuine danger now (*Continued on page 82*)

An Indian Birthday Party

By
H. M. ROSS
Grassy Narrows

TWO years ago, while I was at One Man's Lake, I had the experience of attending an Indian birthday party. I do not know how the idea originated, but old Kitche-Jacob (Big Jacob) McDonald had had a good hunt and decided to have a big party to celebrate the birthday of his youngest son, a tiny tot of four years. So one day in January he came in to the store. The party was to be held the next day. Would I care to come? I certainly would. The festivities were to be held in the house of his cousin Jacob-ess (Little Jacob) because, he explained, Jacob-ess had the biggest and finest house on the reserve.

Accordingly, next morning I dug out my blue suit and oxfords and, having dressed as befitted the occasion, set out at noon across the ice, armed with a couple of yards of blue sateen for the child and a plug of tobacco for Kitche-Jacob.

I was met at the door by Jacob, who, beaming all over, shook my hand ceremoniously. The kitchen was crowded with women gaily dressed in bright prints, scarlet sweaters and the inevitable black silk kerchiefs. Three of them were cooking vigorously over a roaring stove in one corner.

We passed through an archway, hung with a Hudson's Bay white blanket, into the main room. All the men, dressed up in white shirts, blue pants, and gaily beaded moccasins, sat around the walls on benches, smoking and talking. Innumerable children crawled upon the floor, enjoying themselves noisily.

I presented my gifts and Jacob made a speech of welcome, telling how pleased he was to have the *mamoochegay ogema* as a guest. How he did love to speechify.

Then we took our places at a long table set up in the middle of the room: the old men first, to be followed later by the young bucks. In front of each man was a tin cup and plate, knife and spoon; but at my place at the head of the table was a little square of white oilcloth about half a yard square, on which were set an earthenware cup and saucer and plate, and a knife, fork and spoon, all battered but serviceable. Without further ceremony the food was brought in, each dish being offered to me first. I do not think I have ever eaten so much, for to refuse anything would have been a serious breach of etiquette. There was boiled moose nose and moose tongue—great delicacies—roast moose and deer hearts, roast ribs, venison steaks, and a glorified bologna made by stuffing deer intestines with a mixture of minced venison, onions and oatmeal. All this was accompanied by potatoes, rice boiled with raisins, stewed prunes and evaporated apples. The whole topped off with gallons of strong tea sweetened with condensed milk, piles of bannock, molasses cake, and baking powder biscuits. The *piece de resistance*, however, was apple pie—twenty-four of them all told—which, old Jacob proudly told us, his son had brought by dog-team all the way from Minaki, a distance of fifty miles.

When finally we had eaten to repletion—and how those Indians could eat—we made way for the young men. And then, as we all sat around smoking, too full to talk, the women and children had their turn.

I arose to leave about three o'clock and Kitche-Jacob told me to be sure to come back at six o'clock. This was to be a real party!

When I duly presented myself at six, the first thing I saw was the little guest of honour, all dressed up in blue sateen rompers—the identical sateen which I had presented to him at noon. His mother certainly had done some fast sewing.

Followed another long meal, as at noon, although the quantities were considerably diminished.

Then the table was removed, someone began to tune up a violin, and soon square dances and Red River jigs were following each other in quick succession, interspersed with exhibitions of fancy tap dances. And I entered into the dancing with as much zest as anyone, to the delight of the Indians.

At midnight I took leave of my host, assuring him that I had enjoyed myself immensely and that the party had been a great success. He was almost bursting with pride, and confident that that day he had done something which would be the talk of the whole reserve for many moons to come.

ESKIMO LIFE

A careful count will reveal twenty-seven dogs on this Eskimo schooner, not to mention two or three possibly hidden behind the others.

Eskimo women of Baillie Island, butchering a white whale. The odd-shaped hump on the back of the woman on the right is a papoose which she carries between her "snow skirt" and her artiggi.

An Eskimo lad of Baillie Island. The photographer was forced to bribe him with an orange before he would pose with the Arctic flowers.

Labrador Year

Written for Patrick Hugo
and Jacqueline Maud

By
J. S. C. WATT
James Bay District

Labrador photos by W. E. Swaffield.

As a young clerk, the author spent a year among the Company posts along the Labrador coast. We enjoy a brief glance into the life of a Fur Trader as he tells of the interesting people and the exciting experiences encountered in a Labrador Year.

YES, kids, you ask for a story—a true story. As you say, having received a gold medal for long service, surely I must have had some adventures. Well, in looking back I don't think I ever had any real adventures, but with youth and imagination I got quite a kick out of some of my experiences which at the time made them appear adventurous to me. But, unless a fairy with her magic wand can turn the years back and make me young again while I tell you the story, I am afraid you will think the make-believe stories are best.

Well, long, long ago your daddy made quite a little bit of money and, not being a wise man where money was concerned, he purchased a sail-boat with an auxiliary engine and conceived the foolish idea of sailing to Labrador alone.

The *Nascopie* was in Montreal at the time—a much younger *Nascopie* in those days—Captain Mickle in command, with Captain John Ford, late of the *Lady Head* and *Discovery*, as ice pilot and supercargo. I visited the *Nascopie*, and Captain Ford was very hospitable and treated me to some medicine out of a thermos bottle. When I told him my plans, he told *me* what he thought of a man (and he didn't say "man" either) who was foolish enough to prefer a trip in a sail-boat to a passage in a comfortable, well-found icebreaker like the *Nascopie*.

To make a long story short, I did not take the good captain's advice and started laying in provisions for the voyage. Mr. John Henry was then in charge of the Montreal office, and was kind enough not to offer any good advice. In fact I have a suspicion Mr. Henry would have liked to have come along. At any rate he was good enough to help with the preparations, and between Mr. Henry and Mr. Samuel Galbraith (Old Sam) I was outfitted in record time, not forgetting a small supply of the kind of medicine recommended by Captain Ford for seasickness.

I sailed as far as Mingan on the *Aranmore*, commanded by a very bluff and hearty Newfoundland skipper, Captain Hearn, who was even more gifted in his language than Captain Ford, but who delivered me safe and sound at Mingan, your mother's home town. At Mingan I had another whale of a time and stayed with your grandfather—Old Mr. Maloney as he was known, to distinguish him from the younger Maloneys. Your grandfather helped me to alter the boat to my requirements and to stow the cargo. Curiously enough, even your grandmother gave me no good advice, and everybody seemed to take it for granted I was doing the natural thing. At last I was ready to set sail for Labrador. There was no band to play "The Girl I Left Behind Me," but that was the tune that kept ringing in my ears.

I must have spent over a week at Mingan, for the *Aranmore* was again in port when I was ready to sail. I followed her out of port and, running through a thick fog, reached Esquimaux Point ahead of her.

Feeling as large as Christopher Columbus and Jacques Cartier rolled in one, I stood on the wharf and watched the *Aranmore* come alongside, wondering what Captain Hearn would say when he saw me. Alas, pride goes before a fall, and this was the only small triumph I had.

I left Esquimaux Point next day, ran into a fog again and soon after got aground on a sandbar. Before I struggled clear of the sandbar I had lost my bearings altogether, having forgotten a compass. I thought I would sight land all the way, but overlooked the possibility of fogs. Bye and bye an island came in sight. I went ashore to see if I could recognize it, and left the boat anchored at the far point. I started to walk around the island, but found it larger than I expected, and when I returned to the point where I had left the boat there was no boat. I thought I must be mistaken in the point and walked around the island again, the fog still thick and now getting dark. Still no boat, so there was nothing for it but spend the night on the island the best way I could. I had a pipe, but no tobacco, and with not even a biscuit in my pocket I didn't pass such a hot night.

Just at daylight the fog cleared off and I saw my boat. It was anchored at a point which had become submerged at high tide and, in the fog and growing darkness of the evening, I had not seen it. I lost no time in getting aboard and having breakfast; then got under way again. Fog again, as thick as pea soup. To make matters worse I could not get into deep water and walked about on the shoals most of the day hauling my boat after me, as I wasn't going to lose it again.

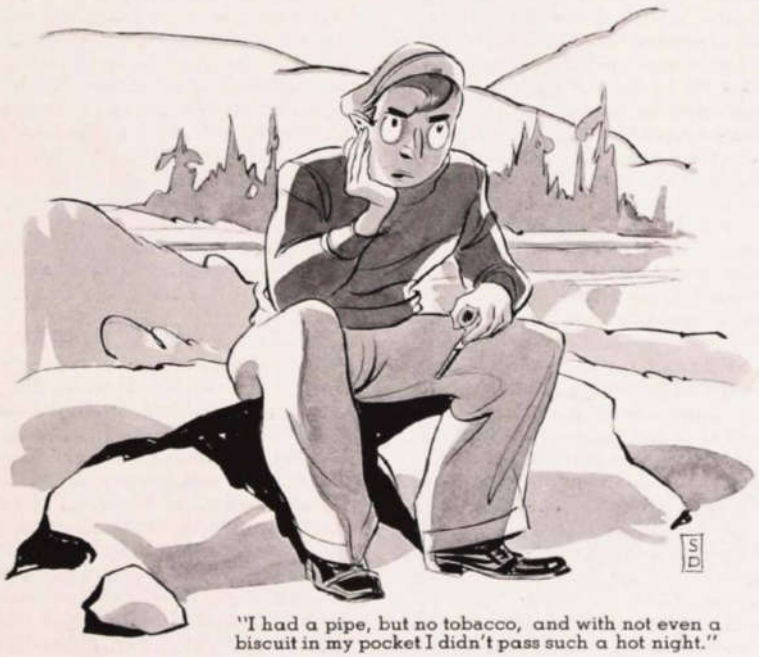
Towards evening, the tide having come in, I got into deep water, started the engine, and soon after anchored close to the shore of the mainland. It was a calm night, but there was a slight roll, and while cooking supper on my coal oil stove—pea soup, I remember it was—the stove upset, and immediately the boat was in flames. Luckily I was close to the shore, so jumped overboard, and when the flames died down a little I tried to put the fire out, but it was no use. I had noticed the boat was leaking, but, from the way the fire blazed up, I have since come to the conclusion it must have been the gasoline tanks which were leaking. At all events everything burned, but although the boat was badly charred it was still afloat.

Another miserable night ashore—hungry and thinking of the pea soup, now too well cooked. It was Maggi pea soup in little packages, I remember. Next day I poled the remains of my boat back to Esquimaux Point and took passage on the *Aranmore* then on her way back to Quebec. Apart from "I told you so," the captain did not rub it in too hard. Christopher Columbus and Jacques Cartier were now in the realms of yesterday and I merely a Hudson's Bay clerk *en route* to his post.

From Quebec I took the train for Sydney, and there boarded the *City of Sydney* for St. John's, Newfoundland. At St. John's I had to wait nearly a week for the Labrador mail steamer *Invermore*, but had a very enjoyable stay. Of the many interesting people I met, the names of Mr. Ryan, of King's Cove, and Captain John Padden, of Grand Banks, still stand out clearly. Captain Padden took me to the south side and showed me the famous old sealers: The *Terra Nova* (Scott's old ship), the *Neptune*, the *Bloodhound*, the *Kite*, and others, including the *Labrador*, the first steam vessel employed by the Hudson's Bay Company in the Eastern Arctic and once commanded by Captain "Dandy" Dunn and the no less famous Captain Alexander Gray. Captain Gray, in his younger days, was a famous whaler, and sailed from Peterhead, where your daddy once sailed from when he was very little older than you are, earning the magnificent sum of five shillings a week. The stories in the school histories would lead one to imagine Sir Humphrey Gilbert founded St. John's, but St. John's was quite a thriving settlement, at least in summer, when Sir Humphrey paid his famous visit. Some of the merchant houses date far back, although not quite as far as the Hudson's Bay Company.

Well, we soon found ourselves quite at home on the *Invermore*, commanded by Captain Jacob Kean, with Westbury Kean as first officer. I afterwards met Westbury Kean in James Bay, where he was captain of the *Fort Churchill* for two summers, and had many a pleasant "cuffer" with him. Captain Jacob looked kind of grumpy, but improved on acquaintance, and in his few moments of leisure used to spin me yarns of the seal hunt, and on one occasion on the bridge sang me part of an old sealing ballad. In those days Captain Kean was a hero with a halo around his head, and though the halo has dimmed with the passing years I think him still a hero. Captain Jacob had long experience in the ice, and was captain of the *Virginia Lake* when she foundered in the ice.

I do not remember how many days we took, as we were in thick fog all the way, going sometimes full speed and sometimes slow, and once stopping



"I had a pipe, but no tobacco, and with not even a biscuit in my pocket I didn't pass such a hot night."

"It was a calm night, but there was a slight roll, and while cooking supper on my coal oil stove—pea soup, I remember it was—the stove upset, and immediately the boat was in flames."

and reversing just in time to see a huge rock appear in the fog right ahead of us. At the different ports of call—excepting, I think, Harbour Grace—a boat was lowered with mail and passengers, although how the captain knew he was at a port I never did know; but with some uncanny sixth sense he knew.

Eventually we reached Cartwright, landed and were introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Swaffield and family, Mr. Lorenz Learmonth, Mr. Murphy (customs house officer), and a very large heavily built individual, Mr. Tim Haydn, the tide waiter. While the post staff were busy with mail and freight, I was standing around kind of out of the picture, when Mr. Haydn suggested I might have a stroll with him. He took me along to the carpenter's shop and upstairs to a living room, where he fished a brown jar from under the bed and treated me to some medicine of a different brand to Captain Ford's, but equally as effective. On my return Mr. Murphy suggested I come along and have a look at his quarters, and he also fished out some medicine. After so many years, I still have pleasant recollections of both Mr. Murphy and Mr. Haydn, not only for their friendly action of making a stranger feel at home, but for their kindly personalities and their willingness at all times to lend a hand and do a kindly act whenever possible.

Next day, feeling quite at home, I became acquainted with the outdoor staff—Jimmy Payne, cooper and beach master, Skipper Ned Learning (Uncle Ned), Skipper Freeman Saunders, Sam Learning the carpenter, and others. Jimmy Payne was a personality. On Sundays he was churchwarden, and at all times greatly respected, but on the wharf and in his own element his language was highly picturesque and descriptive. His religion was God and the Hudson's Bay Company, although sometimes I had my doubts as to which came first.

Cartwright was full of interest. The salmon fishing was a record. The wharf and platforms were crowded with salmon tierces and the coopers were hammering at hoops for all they were worth. Boats loaded with salmon were at the wharf in great confusion, but Jimmy Payne was handling the situation as only Jimmy could.

In the house Mrs. Swaffield presided over a large family. Besides the grown-ups there were Stewart, Bert, Alick, Millie, Harold, Sidney and Georgina. The eldest son, Wilfred, was clerk at Rigolet. Harold was quite a small fellow then, and Mr. Learmonth and I had lots of fun with him. We always had fun over something, and possibly Mrs. Swaffield and Mr. Learmonth still remember the joke about the Labrador lady who wrote to the Boston papers, and confused a sealskin cossack with a highlands kilt. Mr. Swaffield had the general direction of all the hurry and confusion and handled it easily. He always had time to chat with a customer, and could even listen to Pheobe Marten discoursing on "Fox's Book of Martyrs" without

turning a hair. Officially I was fur buyer, but as this was not the fur season my duties fluctuated between acting as accountant and helping to install a derelict motor engine in a boat known as the *Battle Axe*, which was very old and just a sieve. The engine did not require a water intake, but pumped the water out of the boat, which with the help of a spudgel kept the level sufficiently low. Alick usually went as skipper of this boat.

Later in the fall we were all in church one Sunday night—the clergyman being Mr. Kirby—when a steamer's whistle blew, and kept on blowing. I am afraid most of the congregation did not wait for the benediction but rushed out to find that it was the old *Pelican* returned from the North. Something had happened to her whistle and it kept on blowing for some time. Well, this was a welcome sight, and a red letter day. I had never seen the *Pelican* (formerly a British gun boat) and was delighted to get aboard. Certainly no other vessel ever gave me such a thrill as this old ice-battered veteran of the seas, with her tall spars,

A view of the Labrador coast, just approaching Cartwright, with a fishing schooner in the foreground.

high bulwarks and poop deck. The *Pelican* was then commanded by Captain Alexander Cleveland Smith, to give him his full name, with Mr. Mack (afterwards so well known as Captain Mack) as first officer. The third officer was Mr. Burns, a very kindly capable man with brass rings in his ears. Captain Smith made us all welcome. He had been so long acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Swaffield that he almost looked on Cartwright as his home town. What a night we spent! I, with both ears cocked, listening to tales of the North, a region then unknown to me.

The *Pelican* anchored several days at Cartwright, and they were all days of glamour. I spent most of my time with Mr. Mack, Mr. Burns, Mr. Shaw the engineer, and the old white headed second engineer, Mr. Shanks. And what tales I listened to and what "cuffers" I heard. It is a good job Mr. Swaffield had the dependable Mr. Learmonth to assist him, as I was of little use to him. The *Pelican* crew were a remarkable crowd—mostly all young jolly fellows, if I except the boatswain Mr. McPhail, who was a regular old-timer that might have been shipmate with Long John Silver. The ship had a proper band with a conductor who wielded a baton—"The *Pelican's* Foo Foo Band" painted on the big drum. To my mind the "Foo Foo" band had Sousa's and all other bands beaten to a frazzle. They gave several concerts in the carpenter's shop, which was crowded, you may be sure. They certainly had lots of talent, and would have made a hit with Major Bowes. Mr. Mack was chairman and introduced the various "stars," usually by the name they were known on board and not by the names given by their godfathers and godmothers. They had a song about their officers, but the only verse I remember is the one about the engineer, Mr. Shaw:

"Mr. Shaw, our engineer, he is
the man we all adore;
With his dirty rag and his oil
can,
He is the man for the *Pelican*,
And we'll give him a very good
cheer."

They also held revival meetings, but I sometimes doubt if they were sincere. They were usually held when the captain was ashore, the captain being a clergyman's son and orthodox in his views.

One day there was a wedding (John Learning to, I think, Eliza Jane Pardy), and the band waited outside the church and escorted the party to the banqueting hall. They also played for the dance. There was also a christening — baby Georgina Swaffield, with Captain Smith

The S.S. "Pelican," once a British gunboat.

Company post at North West River.

as godfather, but in this new role the captain did not shine and required a lot of prompting.

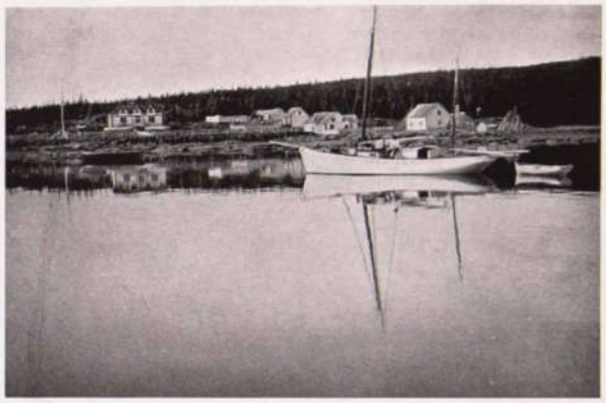
At last the *Pelican* sailed, to our great regret. Shiptime in the North is Christmas, New Year and all the bank holidays in one. While the *Pelican* weighed anchor Jimmy Payne and Uncle Ned had an argument about the loading of the cannon, and Jimmy, to be perverse, put in an extra charge, with the result the cannon jumped off the wharf and had to be fished out later on. Farewell, good old *Pelican*, old British heart of oak, with a crew in every way worthy of your best traditions. As someone said, "We will never meet your like again."

Well, I hope you are not tired, for, as Paul Jones and President Roosevelt said, "I have not yet begun to fight." In other words, I have not yet commenced my story.

Late in the fall I again boarded my old friend *Invermore* and proceeded to Rigolet, once the home of Lord Strathcona, and at that time memories of "Mr. Smith" still lingered. I was welcomed at the wharf by Mr. Heath and Mr. Blackhall. Mr. Blackhall wondered how I knew who was Heath and who was Blackhall, but, coming from near Peterhead myself and knowing Mr. Blackhall came from there, I could make no mistake, his voice bringing back visions of "my ain countree."

It was November, if I remember rightly, and the schooner *Rigolet* was loaded with supplies for North West River and ready to sail with the first fair wind The season being so late, the regular crew were unwilling to go; so besides Skipper John Blake and his mate Willie Chickwak, there was only the cook, who was called Simon Andrew or Andrew Simon. As no more crew were available it was suggested that Mr. Blackhall and I would make up the deficiency, to which we were quite agreeable. Another passenger was Mr. Doty, an American gentleman who was spending the winter with the Grenfell Mission. On the afternoon of my second day at Rigolet we shook hands with Mr. Heath and hoisted the anchor. We were scarcely under way when it commenced to snow heavily and the wind veered to almost right ahead. The skipper wished to reach some harbour at no great distance, so we tacked and carried on. The snow was so thick we could not see the shore, and Mr. Heath told us afterwards he could hear our sails shaking as we went about close to the shore. The ropes were frozen and would not run freely through the blokes, but for all this the skipper said nothing about turning back until first the staysail sheet and then the foresail sheet parted. Then there was nothing for it but make a fair wind and run back to our anchorage.

Next day Skipper John rove new sheets, Mr. Heath gave us a doch an doris of what he called oxo, and we made another start. This time we had better success, but for one misfortune. The greater part of our rations consisted of salt codfish, and Willie, the mate, decided he would tow them alongside to take out some of the salt. Some little time after he looked over the side, and I can still see his face of blank amazement. "John," he yelled, "the — fish has gone." They had disappeared, leaving us pretty short of what is known in James Bay as "meatkind," which included fish. The wind carried us past Kawallah, and just took us to Pelters cove, and then it commenced to blow and snow in true Labrador style. We anchored close inshore and,



The Rigolet post, with Reverend W. T. Mercer's boat in the foreground.

as the skipper had doubts as to his anchor holding, we collected all the ropes we could find and made a shorefast to the other side of the cove. The wind howled and blew outside, but in the cabin we were comfortable and jolly. Simon Andrew proved to be no slouch of a cook with the little he had to cook. Mr. Doty had been in the Philippine Islands, so there was no lack of interesting talk. Bye and bye we all turned in and managed to sleep in spite of the heavy roll and the surging of the anchor chains.

All at once I awoke and knew something had happened. John was already on deck, and we could just hear his voice above the howling of the wind shouting that the shorefast had parted and the anchors were dragging. We lost no time, and putting Eskimo boots on our bare feet we all rushed on deck. And what a night it was, blowing, snowing and dark. We could just see the edge of the breakers close at hand. We manned the windlass and hove for all we were worth, but it was slow work, as we had nearly all the chain out. We got one anchor up and then we had to get sail on before the other came home. And what a job it was with frozen ropes and sails. We would have been driven ashore but for the coolness of Skipper John. As we slowly hove in the last anchor, he stayed quietly at the wheel and did what he could to handle the sheets. We appeared to be right in the breakers and, with his scratch crew, had he become at all excited we should

have been wrecked. As it was, it was a close shave. We scarcely had way on when it was "Hard a less," and round on the other tack.

We had no time to reef, but had to carry all sail somehow. Sometimes I thought we were over, and Mr. Doty, who was watching a gun in a holster, hanging on the cabin wall, made several bolts for the cabin door, thinking the same thing. We had cold feet in more ways than one, but, after finding the *Rigolet* could stand up to it, slipped below and put on stockings and duffles. When I came up again I could not face the blast and had no idea where we were, but the skipper had kept his sense of direction and some time later anchored in another cove—St. John's Cove, I think—and we again turned in for the night.

In the morning here we were, and here we stayed for something like ten days, with calms and gales of head wind and supplies running low. The skipper and Willie went ashore one day and shot two geese, but this was only one meal; and one day Simon Andrew, who had been feeding us on plain duff, came in with a long face and told us he had no more baking powder. Mr. Doty immediately handed him a bottle of Eno's fruit salts. We thought this a joke, but found the Eno's quite as good as authentic baking powder. The ground was now covered with snow and things began to look hopeless. Then one morning, a fair wind and we were off. The wind held steady all day, and when it became dark we were nearing North West River. We took turns at the masthead looking for the island, but we never saw it at all. The first things we saw were the lights of North West River post, and welcome lights they were. It was too dark to get into the river, so we anchored outside, and the boat landed Doty, Blackhall and myself at the point, where we walked to the post. Peter Smith made us right at home and soon we were sitting down to a tremendous supper. I still think of North West River as one of the most snug and comfortable posts in the Company. The house was small but very comfortable, and the gardens neatly fenced in. Lord Strathcona is supposed to have made the original gardens, but they were afterwards greatly improved by succeeding managers. Mr. Smith was alone at the post but had Tom McKenzie to help him with outdoor work, and Mrs. McKenzie (Thursa) acted as housekeeper. Across the river was the Revillon post. Mr. Raoul Thevenet was in charge, with Mr. Joseph Lescaudron as assistant. Mr. Lescaudron was afterwards drowned in the Albany River, James Bay.

Next day the *Rigolet* came alongside the wharf and Skipper John Blake, Willie Chickwak and Simon Andrew left immediately in the schooner's boat for Rigolet, the season being so late they could not afford to delay. We got busy and unloaded the schooner, and the next day, with Tom Blake from the Rapids as temporary skipper, we intended leaving for Mud Lake, where the schooner was to winter. In the morning we were all ready to go. We let go the shore lines and hoisted the staysail to bring her head round. The *Rigolet* however, instead of forging ahead as she turned, spun round on her heel and ran aground on the shoals below the wharf. We found the reason of this afterwards. A huge quantity of salt seal meat tied up in old nets was moored to the end of the wharf and the schooner had caught her heel on the seal meat. We had some difficulty getting the vessel off, and bye and bye Messrs. Thevenet and Lescaudron came to our assistance. Mr. Lescaudron, who was formerly in the French navy, took charge, and after a lot of heaving and hauling we at last got the vessel clear, but it was now too late to leave for Mud Lake. The next few days there was no wind, but hard frosts, and ice formed rapidly in the river. Mud Lake, already frozen up, was out of the question, and there was nothing for it but to winter the schooner in the river, a very unsafe place during the spring break up. The ice had now formed to such an extent that we had to spend two days cutting a berth for the *Rigolet* close to the bank. At last we had her secured and dismantled, sails and ropes dried and stowed away.

Soon all was frozen and winter travelling commenced. The post had a splendid team that winter, all young powerful dogs, and the leader I remember had pink eyes. Early in the winter Mr. Blackhall left to take charge of the outpost at Mud Lake. He left possibly too early and had a tough trip. But if I wander

The schooner "Rigolet," with the crew dressed for action.

Putting the "Rigolet" into her winter quarters at Rigolet.

into other people's experiences I will never finish. Soon after, we had visitors—Dr. and Mrs. Paddon, Miss Smith, Messrs. Doty and Flynn, all from the Grenfell Mission, at MudLake; Mr. Robinson, Mr. and Mrs. Potts and son from Kinnimish. During the early part of the winter we had a very lively time, and Mr. Smith, though very quiet, was excellent company. Thursa was a splendid cook, and altogether I have nothing but pleasant memories of North West River.

Sometime before Christmas I left for Rigolet and Cartwright in company with Dr. Paddon and Mr. Doty. Fred Rich was my dog driver. Dr. Paddon had mince pies in his rations, which he kindly shared with his less fortunate travellers. I don't like to think of how many years since we ate those pies, but I still remember them with pleasure. I reached Rigolet and Cartwright in due course, and everywhere found furs plentiful and business good. After a short stay at Cartwright, Mr. Swaffield and I left for Rigolet, Mr. Swaffield to continue on to North West River, I to proceed to Davis Inlet, and Mr. Learmonth to go as far south as Battle Harbour. On the trip to Rigolet Mr. Swaffield was pilot and I was dog driver. If I remember right, we were lost on one occasion somewhere near Flatwater, and I know my dog driving left much to be desired.

Old Sam Broomfield, who sent King George V a tobacco pouch and received a letter of thanks, of which he was very proud.

At Rigolet I was provided with another fine team of dogs, with an old experienced Eskimo, Tom Palliser, as driver. Tom rather astonished me one night. We were camped on the Big Neck. I was looking at some pictures in a magazine, and showed Tom one of them and asked him if he had ever seen anything like that. "Yes," said Tom, who never wasted a word. "Where did you see it?" I questioned. "In San Francisco," said Tom. Sure enough, I found Tom had taken part in the World's Fair at Chicago and then had crossed the continent and had seen a great deal more than I ever had. Tom was a man of very few words, and no one would ever have known he had travelled so far. I asked him lots of questions about his trip, but his answers were always short, and often he did not answer at all. Once, when we were nearing Makkovik I asked him, "How far is it to Makkovik?" All the answer I received was "Perhaps a good little bit, perhaps not very far." Once it was very cold and he was shivering. "Why don't you get off and run a bit?" I asked. "Too old," said Tom. And that finished the conversation.

At the Moravian Mission station, Makkovik, I was very hospitably entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Lenz, and at Hopedale by Mr. and Mrs. Hettach. Here, besides other good things, I remember having some sweet kraut made of red cabbages, which goes to show that "eats" play an important part in the North.

Mr. R. J. C. Handford, then in charge of Davis Inlet post, met me at Sam Broomfield's place and we spent quite a wonderful evening. Sam is one of Labrador's personalities, and I found him very entertaining. With great pride he showed me a letter from King George thanking Sam for a sealskin pouch sent the King on behalf of the people of Labrador. Sam's great rival, Tommy Evans, also had a letter of which he was proud—a letter from President Wilson inviting him to his daughter's wedding. Mr. Sayers, who married one of the president's daughters, spent some time in Labrador and naturally was acquainted with Tommy Evans.

While at Davis Inlet I used to pay frequent visits to Jim Dickers in his cooper's shop. Jim was a bachelor and, besides being an expert cooper, was as tidy and methodical as an old maid. He could turn out as many barrels per day as any cooper, but he never appeared to hurry and his shop was always tidy. He must have swept his shavings up as he made them, for there were never any lying around.

On my return I reached Makkovik on Easter Sunday and was able to attend Easter service in the Moravian Church. I also spent a few days with Mr.

Davis Inlet Post

Moravian Church at Makkovik.

Heath at Rigolet. While there I assisted Mr. Heath to pick out and describe a small shipment of furs on which we intended to ask London the correct grade. One silver fox Mr. Heath described in true Labrador fashion as "prime and well furred but a little rubbed aft."

Bye the bye I was considered quite a fur expert at Rigolet. Dr. Grenfell, I think it was, had presented the post with a small kid skin stretched exactly like a mink, and looking very much like a brown mink except the ears were wrong. At any rate it puzzled everyone. Mr. Swaffield however had mentioned this alleged mink, so when Messrs. Heath and Blackhall came along with the skin, a cunning look on their faces, I looked very wise, gave the skin a shake and said, "Don't you know what this is? It is only a common kid skin." Collapse of Heath and Blackhall.

Before break-up I had returned to North West River and found the post completely sold out except for flour. I remember we had plain duff and molasses for days until the molasses gave out; then it was plain duff. A little later we had doughnuts made in fresh seal oil—and very good they were—then ducks a-plenty. There was lots of work. A new store was being built, and there was the *Rigolet* in a very unsafe position. The vessel was very leaky and was now almost full of solid ice, which had to be chopped out before we could do anything. Mr. Smith, Tom McKenzie and I chopped ice every minute we could spare, and as we got lower down in the hold and the days got milder we had to bail water out before we could chop the ice. One day Mr. Smith and I bailed for hours without getting the water level much lower; then Mr. Smith had to leave to attend a customer. I kept on bailing and was surprised at the progress I was making. When Smith returned he said, "Well, how's it going?" "Fine," said I. "The water is down three feet." Smith did not want to believe this, and when he saw it was true he said, "Well, you *must* have been working." But soon after we found out why I had made such wonderful progress. The tide was falling as I was bailing. After that we only bailed with a falling tide.

When we had chopped the *Rigolet* clear of ice we discovered that she was just a basket, most of the oakum having frozen in the ice and been pulled out. Mr. Blackhall had now returned from Mud Lake, so the three of us went into conference and decided to heave her down to caulk and pitch her bottom. We had all read of pirates heaving their vessels down, but none of us had seen it done. It was not so easy as we had expected, but after no end of work we succeeded. Then it was caulk and pitch. And what a mess we were in. Pitch even got in our hair, and we simply could not get it off our clothes and hands. There was no such thing as work hours; we simply worked from daylight till dark. But did we mind the hard work? No; not at all. We were pirates careening our ship on some lonely isle on the Spanish Main, but much happier of course than real pirates. We finished one side, then turned her round, hove her down, caulked and pitched the other side, and were going to let her up again when something went wrong. I think we let go the lines to the hull before the masthead ropes. At any rate she slipped out on her side and sank. And so did our hearts. We could not have felt much worse had we lost our ship and been marooned on some desert island. Mr. Smith said nothing and walked to the house, leaving the other two pirates looking at their handiwork.

At low tide our hopes revived. The hatch coamings showed, and we lost no time in rigging burtons and starting to bail with a barrel. As the water level gradually lowered Mr. Blackhall jumped into the hold and expedited the work by dipping the barrels by hand. Cold work it must have been, but he stuck at it until we were able to use the schooner's pumps. There were great rejoicings that night. The *Rigolet* was safely at anchor and not leaking very much, in fact surprisingly little. Our troubles were not at an end however. The river was open as far as the rapids but the Grande Lake ice had not yet come down. And that was the danger. The wharf was solid and well ballasted, so we decided to beach the schooner below the wharf; which we did as speedily as possible. Very soon after the ice came down, roaring and grinding. The wharf stood but the schooner was pushed a little further ashore, though not at all damaged. As the ice came roaring down opposite the wharf and things were beginning to look serious, I was lighting my pipe—there was nothing we could do; we had done all that was possible—when Smith turned round and asked me what kind of a man I was, lighting my pipe when the Company's property was in danger. I did not laugh but slipped my pipe back into my pocket. I knew how badly he felt just at that moment.

The next job was rigging and ballasting the schooner, but we soon finished that. The next event was a marriage—Dan Michlin to Violet Blake—and Skipper Tom Blake, father of the bride, wanted to use the upstairs of the new store for the wedding feast. Which was o.k. The happy day arrived, and with it a crowd of guests. A long table of planks was set, and if store

provisions were short game was plentiful. I think there must have been at least a duck or a goose each for every guest. Reverend Mercer performed the ceremony, and then we all trouped upstairs to the feast. Mr. Smith had to propose the health of the bride and groom, and he was very upset over it as he was extremely bashful and public speaking was quite out of his line. But, representing the Company, he felt it was his duty, so set his teeth and prepared for the worst. Reverend Mercer had just said grace, when the floor collapsed. While the first lurch was violent, the rest of the descent was more gradual. No one was excited and most of the guests landed on the ground floor holding a goose or a duck. Company's property or no Company's property, Mr. Smith heaved a sigh of relief: he didn't have to make that speech. The remains of the feast were picked up and the feast continued in the post house by instalments—and at night a big dance.

About this time Skipper John Blake and the crew of the *Rigolet* arrived in a small boat. They reported a great deal of ice in the Bay. They had just managed to get along close to the shore. Now came the only part of that Labrador year I did not enjoy—a long period of waiting. Altogether four vessels were waiting to sail:

"Most of the guests landed on the ground floor holding a goose or a duck."

The Grenfell Mission yawl *Yale*; the *Glad Tidings*, skipped by Reverend Mercer; the *Humming Bird*, owned by old Skipper John Blake; and our own *Rigolet*. Every day we went to the high ground back of the post and looked at the ice, and every day we could see it moving slowly, very slowly. One day it looked a little looser and more open, and our skipper decided to have a look at it from closer range. So all four vessels hove up anchor and set sail with the wind almost fair.

We got to the ice very quickly, but it did not look good. So we hove to and had a look at it from the masthead. We could just see open water at the other side, and though there were plenty of leads, no one knew if they went through or not. At any rate we decided to try it. Sailing through heavy ice is not so easy as it is nowadays with power, so the skipper took the wheel himself and allowed me to con the schooner from the masthead. Was I tickled? I felt just like Jim Hawkins must have felt when he steered the *Hispaniola* to the North Harbour of Treasure Island under the pilotage of Flint's old gunner Israel Hands. At first the leads were good and it was easy, but after "luff" and "bear away" for about half an hour only one lead showed up. I could not see whether it went through or not, and I hated to turn back. As we entered the lead the skipper hailed me and asked if the lead went right through. "Yes," I yelled, and hoped for the best. On we went, the lead still open and open water showing at the other side. Soon I could see the lead was closed at the far end by what appeared to be only a few feet of ice. I think John saw it too, for he hailed me again. But I told him it was all right. So we carried on, the lead widening into a little pool or lake. I skirted along looking for a rotten spot in the barrier. At last I saw a weak spot and yelled to the skipper, "Give her lots of headway," and then "Luff," "Hard up," and we were into it. The ice was rotten all right, for we went through into the open sea, and were followed by the other three vessels.

We were making a race for it as far as Rigolet, and when we anchored in the evening—I think at Palter's cove—the *Rigolet* had the lead, and we arranged to start together next morning. I was first on deck next morning—the sea dead calm. I looked around. The *Glad Tidings* was missing; but soon I saw her ahead, Reverend Mercer and his crew towing with a small boat. I yelled, woke everybody up, and without waiting for breakfast we all climbed in our boats and commenced towing. Very soon it started to blow right ahead. The *Yale* was the best sailor "on the wind" and, ratching to windward, soon out-distanced the others and passed the *Glad Tidings*. As the *Yale* shot past the *Glad Tidings* Miss Smith got out the fog horn and tooted at Reverend Mercer. It was hardly "cricket" of Mercer to steal a lead on us, but he was not only a fine seaman but a great pusher. I imagine he did not sleep much all that night and that the temptation to get ahead was just too much for him. He was the toughest of the tough—drove his own dogs in winter, usually with neither cap nor mitts. I read the account of his death in the papers some years ago. He was crossing a bay on the Newfoundland coast in winter and was caught in a blizzard and frozen to death. He wasn't always popular with "the crowd" but had qualities demanding respect, and his death was probably the one he would have chosen—a Viking's death.

Result of the race: *Yale* first, *Rigolet* second. At Rigolet we had sad news of Mr. Flynn, who had spent the winter at Mud Lake. By the last ice he had accompanied Dr. Paddon to the summer hospital at Indian Harbour—met with a gun accident and his leg had to be amputated. By the first mail boat he received news of his mother's death. Later I met him on the *Kyle* on crutches, but as cheerful as ever. He accepted his troubles in true Labrador spirit.

At Rigolet I renewed acquaintance with Bill Shephard, of Valleys Bight. Bill was (and perhaps still is) a Labrador worthy of the first note. Kind hearted and hospitable like all Labrador people, he had a gift for tall stories. When I met him in the winter I remarked the snow was deep and the going bad. Bill replied that it was nothing. He had made a trip to Hopedale one year when the snow was so deep you could just see the tips of the dog's tails waving above the snow. Bill had a nice little jack (small fishing schooner, in this case with outriggers on the quarters instead of booms) which took my fancy, and which he guaranteed had a pitchpine-oak bottom, whatever that might be. I bought it for $100. Boats were cheap in Labrador in those days. A day or two afterwards I left for Cartwright in the jack, with George Dickers and Peter Pottle as crew. We had a fair wind and bye and bye too much of it—pulled the stem out of the boat we were towing and lost it. I wasn't sorry, as it threatened to climb aboard once or twice. The wind increased and I shipped a few seas right over my head, and I was glad when Peter piloted us into a harbour at Indian Islands. Next day the wind was fair and not blowing too hard and we reached Cartwright before dark.

Getting to Cartwright was like getting home. Besides the Swaffields and the regular staff, I was welcomed by Mr. N. M. W. J. McKenzie and his son Burns, with whom I had stayed two years before at North Bay. Mr. McKenzie, now general superintendent of the Company's eastern posts, was on an inspection trip.

Now, kids, here ends a Labrador year—a year I enjoyed and always look back on with pleasure. I have mentioned lots of names which probably mean nothing to you, but names which represent people I like to think of. Good fellows, all—some of them ladies, but good fellows just the same.

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HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE, WINNIPEG, CANADA

Enemies of the Caribou

Photo by A. H. Stewart

By GEORGE ANDERSON
Nelson River District

The country of which the author writes is, roughly, that which Rasmussen designates as being occupied by the Caribou Eskimos. It may be defined geographically as that area lying south of a line drawn from the mouth of Ferguson River to the west end of Baker Lake, bordered on the east by Hudson Bay and on the west by Kazan River, and extending as far south as Nueltin Lake in the west and Hubbart's Point (Long Point) in the east. It is occupied by the Padleymuit, Hownertomuit and Ash-i-armuit tribes of Eskimos, and, where there happens to be bush, a few Chipewyan Indians.

CARIBOU are the staple article of food to the Eskimos and Indians who live in caribou country. It may be argued that the Eskimos along the sea-coast of this region have access to seal meat. From my observations, however, I would say that seal meat is not a congenial article of food for them. True, they eat it, but not from preference.

As a food these Eskimos have three ways of (one cannot very well use the word "preparing," because they don't in the accepted sense) using it. They are (1) dried, (2) boiled, and (3) frozen.

The dried meat (*nipko*) is put up during the spring migration of the bucks northwards, the meat being cut into strips and set in the sun to dry. This is, as is all such work, the women's job, and a woman who knows her business can remove all the flesh from an animal without making a break. There is one curious point about *nipko* which may be of interest: for this purpose the Eskimos will not use the flesh of an animal which has been allowed to lie over night with the entrails and hide intact.

Boiled meat is, of course, common to all seasons, but during the winter a great proportion of the meat is eaten frozen, the only implement required being a sharp axe. It may be mentioned that practically the only organs of any animal the Eskimos do not eat are

the hearts, livers and kidneys. Everything else is edible, the tongues, brains and eyes being considered great delicacies.

Besides being the staple human food, it is well to remember that it is used almost exclusively in this region for dog feed.

In addition to being the larder, the caribou supplies a variety of other essentials for the natives: sinews for sewing thread, strings, and in some cases rope; skins for bedding, boots, socks, mitts, pants, parkas, tents, and an assortment of bags, etc.; fat for illumination, although with the coming of the trader this is fast falling into disuse.

It may be seen from the foregoing that the caribou loom large in importance in the lives of the northerners, and should there be any danger of extermination steps should be taken to offset these dangers before it is too late.

Let us now look at the various factors which are said to be menacing the continued existence of these animals. They may, in order of importance, be put under the following categories, viz: wanton killing, civilization, predatory animals, disease.

The people most dependent upon the caribou are those who are most guilty of indiscriminate slaying. Most natives are improvident, and, while not being as notoriously so as the Chipewyans, the Eskimos are cursed with that trait. Few, if any, white men in my experience are given to needless slaughter. The most of them count expenses, and ammunition costs money. The natives on the other hand seem to go berserk when they get into range of a herd. After killing sufficient for their requirements, they appear unable to stop. A kind of blood-lust takes hold of them, and they continue to kill until there is nothing left standing or within range.

From this it would appear that the advent of the modern rifle contributes greatly towards this slaughter. I, in common with most people who witness this spectacle for the first time, was of that opinion. The Eskimos themselves, however, have a different story to tell. They assert that before they had firearms the deer were more tame and they, the natives, were able to get closer and kill more. This is borne out by competent witnesses. West of Padley post there are natives who yet pursue the caribou, using the time honoured methods. They simply wait at known deer crossings and spear the herds in the water from kayaks. On one occasion I remonstrated with an Eskimo about the amount of ammunition he used and the number of caribou he killed. He informed me that if I wanted to see wasteful killing I should go further inland. At the same time he told me that he had made a trip into that region during the previous summer and had witnessed such a killing himself. Apparently the crossing at which it took place was above a falls on a fair sized river. The Eskimos waited in ambush until a large herd entered the stream and then took to their kayaks. Practically the whole herd was wiped out and the river below the falls was dammed with dead deer. The tragedy of it all was that the bulk of these caribou were left to rot. A somewhat similar tale was told me by a white man. During one of the periodic famines experienced in that country, he had occasion to pass through an Eskimo camp. He knew that these particular people had killed abundant meat during the fall migration, and naturally enough asked an old man how it was that they were now starving. The reply was that they had not bothered to move the carcasses to a safe place after the killing. Consequently the majority were lost under the overflow which subsequently froze over. The Chipewyans are responsible for another phase of this wastefulness. It has been reported on numerous occasions that these Indians have killed caribou for no other reason than to obtain the tongues. In some parts of the country it is not uncommon to see literally hundreds of carcasses left by the Chipewyans with only the tongues removed.

Caribou often fight, especially during their mating season. Their horns sometimes lock and break off, and occasionally skeletons are found with the horns still locked.
Photo by Department of Mines and Natural Resources

In the previous paragraphs I have made reference to one aspect of civilization, *i.e.*, the modern rifle. Before going on to civilization as a whole, there is one other point about rifles which should be raised. Within the last few years the power of the ordinary .22 cartridge has been so increased that it is capable of killing caribou at a fairly long range. It should be pointed out that it is usually the young boys who hunt with rifles using this type of shell, and that the older hunters and all white men of my acquaintance use high powered rifles. Unfortunately, for every animal killed outright with

these rifles (.22) there are innumerable which wander off so severely wounded that they also die without being of any use to anyone.

There are opinions that, with the encroachment of civilization, the caribou must disappear as did the buffalo. Although civilization does tend to drive game into more remote places the case of the buffalo is not analogous to that of the caribou. What was buffalo country is now a fertile wheat belt. But it is not likely that the present caribou country will ever prove to be productive. Except for trading posts and mineral finds in isolated areas, the caribou will be left in much the same state as they are today.

Of the predatory animals which rely on the caribou for their main food supply, wolves make by far the greatest inroads in their numbers. There is no doubt about wolves being destructive. One has only to see the carcasses of deer left strewn over the country to learn that fact. Some are not even touched—simply killed for the love of killing. True, it is a tremendous waste, but then the caribou have survived countless ages with the wolves having it all their own way. It is the accumulation of enemies which endanger the herds. Wolves today are extremely abundant, but they are no more so than they have been in the past.

Of recent years we have been hearing more and more about caribou dying off by disease. Undoubtedly these animals are, in common with every other species, afflicted by some ailments. Some of these are probably fatal, for it is unlikely that all caribou which survive their more tangible enemies live long enough to die of senile decay. On the other hand I have never heard of a pestilence which has struck down whole herds.

The only real danger is wanton killing. Before the coming of firearms the natives had been accustomed to promiscuous slaying. At that time however the slaughter was confined to the spring and fall migrations. Now they have an all-the-year-round open season. The advancement of civilization and the white man is not, I think, a pressing menace. If one takes into consideration the number of predatory animals killed by the "whites" it will be seen that the caribou benefit, because every wolf killed is a potential saving (at a conservative estimate) of a hundred caribou per annum. On the other hand wolves are necessary, for without them the caribou would probably degenerate. As it is the wolves keep them on the *qui vive* and help to maintain that "balance of nature" which, if the wolves were eliminated, would be destroyed. The question of disease also comes under the "balance of nature." It is a known fact that all animal life runs in cycles, and we are beginning to realize that each individual cycle hinges very definitely on the others. In other words the prosperity of one affects the whole. At present comparatively little is known of the caribou in this direction, but we assume that they fit into the picture also.

The following are brief comments on the scarcity and abundance of caribou during the past ten years. Preceding each note is the name of the locality to which the observation pertains.

1926-27, Padley—Extremely scarce. Starvation.

1927-28, Padley—Scarce; barely sufficient for requirements.

1928-29, Padley—Abundant.

1929-30, Padley—Abundant.

1930-1931, Nonala—Exceptionally abundant.

1931-32, Tha-anne River—Abundant; sufficient for requirements.

1932-33, Nonala—Extremely scarce.

1933-34, Churchill—Abundant. (This also applies to Nonala.)

1934-35, Nonala—Very abundant.

1935-36—Nonala—Exceptionally abundant.

It is interesting to note that, usually, when the caribou are plentiful inland they are scarce on the coast, and *vice versa*. Why it should be that they change their routes is not definitely understood. The great reason for them coming to the salt water is of course to satisfy their systems' salt requirements. This, however, does not answer the question fully. It is known that these animals at times alter their usual line of travel by considerable distances. Perhaps it is in an endeavour to miss places where they have encountered hunters. Who knows? As good an answer as any to the riddle is given by a friend of mine: For a few seasons the deer allow the natives to have a good time at their expense. The caribou then fool the natives by not turning up at the accepted rendezvous. It is then the natives' turn to have a tough time!

In spite of their ups and downs, the caribou appear to survive without any appreciable shrinkage in their numbers. With them a parallel may be drawn with Tennyson's "Brook"—they go on for ever.

Caribou are strong swimmers and in a migration will cross many lakes.

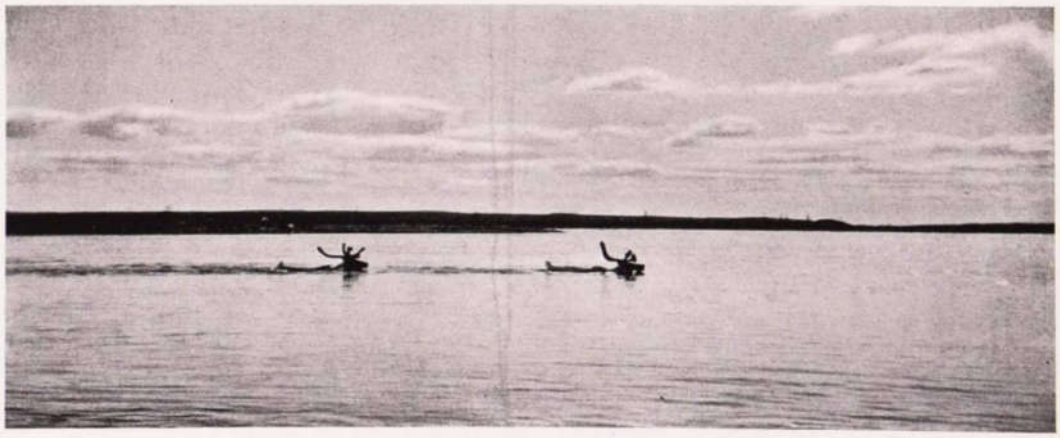


Photo by A. H. Stewart

Apprentice Training, 1937

By R. H. CHESSHIRE, Fur Trade Commissioner's Office

Back Row, left to right: G. Gardiner, Grenfell, Sask.; J. Dixon, Winnipeg; J. G. Cruden, Winnipeg; S. H. Watson, Kamsack, Sask.; W. A. Buhr, Winnipeg; G. E. Miles, Winnipeg; J. D. Hooey, Winnipeg, J. M. Maguire, Winnipeg.
Front Row, left to right: C. W. Larson, Winnipeg; W. H. Black, Komarno, Man.; J. Runcie (Post Manager), Winnipeg; Ralph Parsons (Fur Trade Commissioner), Winnipeg; K. T. Uidler, Winnipeg; P. M. Wright, Winnipeg; D. H. Pitts, Winnipeg.

The first graduating class of the Fur Trade Training School at Winnipeg is pictured above. These young men will soon be on their way to some of the Company's 232 posts to begin their actual apprenticeship and we wish them much happiness in their new life.

A GREAT deal of time and consideration is given today by progressive organizations towards the adequate training of all branches of their staff. Particularly is this true of beginners where a wide opportunity exists to give them a solid grounding in the basic fundamentals of their work. Indeed, upon the manner in which their early training is conducted will depend to a very great extent their ultimate degree of success.

Today the Fur Trade is on the threshold of a new era —an era of great development, rapid changes, improved communication and transport, and intensive competition. All this demands a highly trained staff to ensure that we move with energy and precision. For this reason a training school has been designed which is specially equipped to fulfil the particular requirements of the Fur Trade, and the school became a working reality in February of this year. While it is

fully recognized that the training received in the school by beginners can in no way take the place of practical experience, nevertheless all subsequent experience will be the more productive and beneficial if it is preceded by such instruction, which forms a correct foundation.

The apprentices who are to be given elementary training in this school are recruited from the vicinity of Edmonton, Montreal and Winnipeg. The final selection is made in every instance by a representative from the Fur Trade Commissioner's office. In this way recruits are judged and chosen by a constant standard and from the point of view of the Fur Trade as a whole rather than sectional interests. Also it is possible to make sure that the new recruit has put to him in plain terms the conditions of work and life and the prospects before him. More particularly, we can make certain that he realizes the type of service which he is entering, its traditions and background, and what will be expected of him.

In briefly outlining the operations of the school, our comments at this time are restricted to a description of its functions in relation to the training of new recruits, since it is for that purpose only that it has so far been utilized.

The preliminary training covers a nine-weeks course, and the curriculum is designed to give instruction in the following subjects: Fur grading, merchandising, post accounting, first aid, wireless telegraphy, radio, mechanics and carpentry. Dealing with each of the subjects in the order named, we will attempt to describe briefly their respective functions.

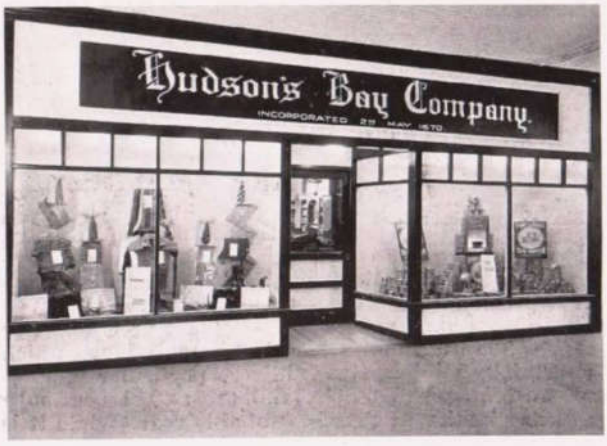
Furs—A representative group of furs is supplied with sufficient of each variety to provide an opportunity to study and grade them by colour, size and texture. The course commences with preliminary instructions of a general nature which are necessary to enable the student to understand the basic fundamentals of grading, after which each recruit is given a different type of fur to grade. Two periods, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, are spent on this fur before passing on to another variety. In this way each student studies five varieties each week, and every type of fur is systematically studied during the period of the course. As is only desirable, repetition is frequent. The selection of pelts is, of course, changed often to prevent the student grading from memory.

While such a brief course on a subject so comprehensive could not be expected to produce an expert grader, or anything even approaching it, nevertheless it does provide an invaluable foundation upon which the beginner can expand his knowledge in the future.

Merchandise—Here again the object of the course is to explain in simple terms the elementary fundamentals upon which profitable store-keeping is based. A specific period of time is allotted to each subject, and their sequence so arranged that the student is enabled to grasp the outstanding fundamentals without confusion. Each phase of merchandising is discussed first in theory and then followed by practical demonstrations. For instance, after a theoretical discussion on the functions and importance of basic stocks, the recruits are taken into the model trading store and introduced to a purposely ill-balanced assortment of merchandise. Their ultimate criticisms and recommendations indicate to what extent the principles previously enunciated have been understood.

The merchandise instruction is given in an actual store fully stocked with merchandise and specially constructed for purposes of training. The store is equipped with the latest type of small store fixtures, such as selling tables, self-service grocery bunks, removable stock shelves, etc. All this equipment is standardized and can be ordered for any trading post. Thus district managers and visiting post managers who see any such fixtures that could be used advantageously in their stores have only to request a blueprint on which is shown all the necessary specifications for its construction. It will be seen from the accompanying photographs illustrating the exterior and interior of the store that it is in every sense of the word a practical working unit.

Post Accounting—For the first month the new recruits are taught the elementary principles of simple bookkeeping, after which they apply the knowledge so acquired to our forms and system. In this manner no great difficulty is experienced in understanding a



The interior of the store is equipped with modern store fixtures and fully stocked with merchandise.

The model trading store, situated in the Fur Trade depot in Hudson's Bay House. Instruction in window dressing is given in the school.

subject that has proved a constant difficulty to many others who have not had the privilege of this early training.

A comprehensive understanding of this work is essential to a post manager, and if he can perform his accounting duties with ease and despatch it means just that much more time and thought can be devoted to subjects of greater importance.

First Aid—The first aid training is undertaken by the St. John's Ambulance Corps. Classes are given once weekly for a period of one and a half hours under the expert supervision of the St. John's Ambulance Corps representative, Dr. J. H. R. Bond. Dr. Bond has devoted a great part of the past twenty-five years to the teaching of first aid and has conducted his classes to the evident interest and appreciation of his pupils. At the expiration of the course the students are given a practical examination under a specially appointed examiner and thereby have the opportunity to secure their diplomas of proficiency.

The value of this work cannot be over-emphasized, as the knowledge thus gained might well provide the means of saving life or limb on some future occasion.

Radio and Wireless—Radio instruction has taken the form of a series of one hour lectures each week giving practical demonstrations on the elementary principles of radio, with a view to providing the student with the necessary knowledge to diagnose the cause of breakdowns and defects and effect the necessary repairs. The transmitting and receiving by Morse code has been very successfully taught, and this work has found ready and interested reception. As with the other subjects, tests are given at the end of the course to ascertain the proficiency of each individual.

A knowledge of this work is particularly important, and it is being specifically introduced at this time with a view to providing our men with the necessary knowledge to ultimately enable rapid communication being carried on between posts by means of short wave wireless.

Mechanics—In the teaching of mechanics, tuition covers various types of engines, and particularly those used for lighting plants and outboard motors. Special attention is given to a detailed study of outboard motors and their well known idiosynerasies. A working knowledge of these motors can be of very real practical assistance, often saving considerable time and expense.

Carpentry—These classes concentrate on practical building and repair problems. An elementary working knowledge proves to be of great practical assistance in later years.

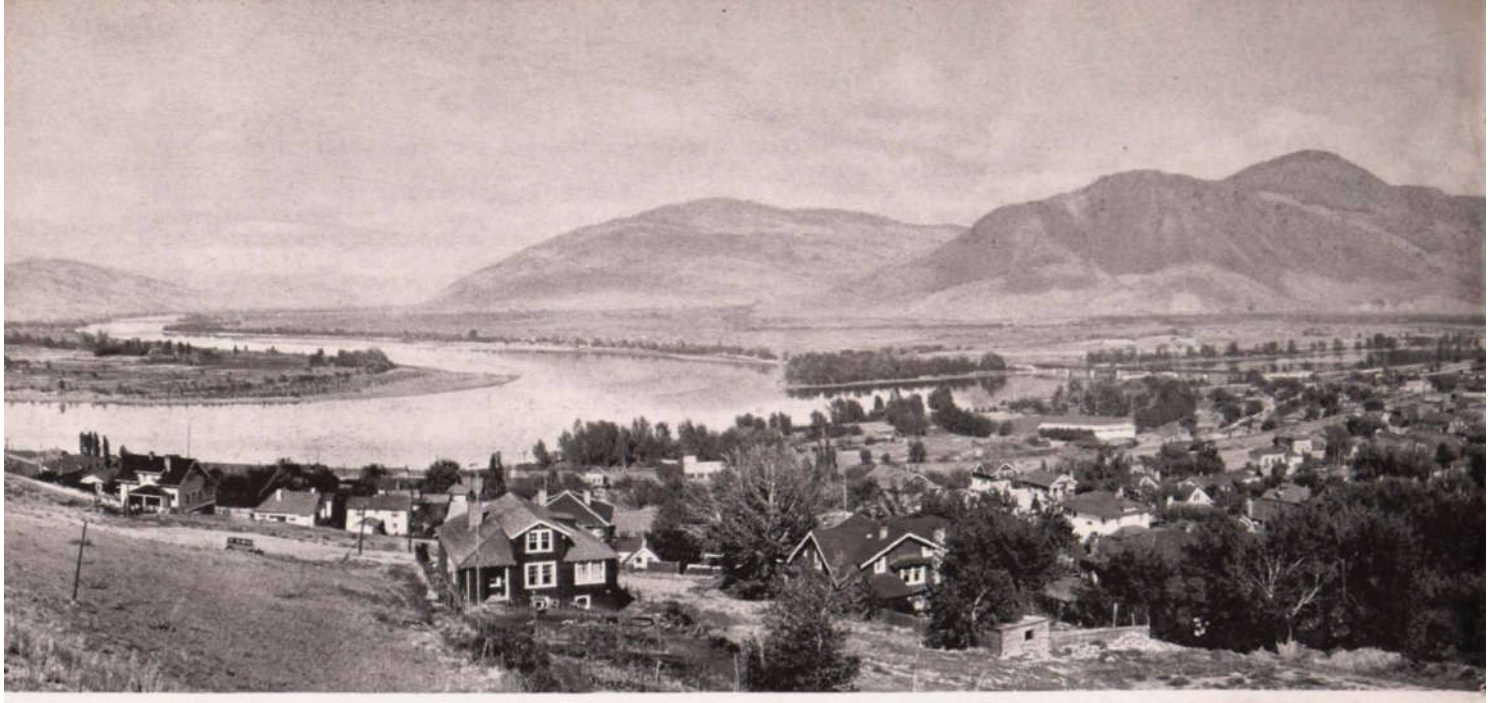
In addition to the subjects already mentioned, which formed the main part of the course, arrangements were made for a series of half-hour talks each day. Twice a week these talks were on subjects concerning the Company's history and generally consisted of a graphic description of outstanding personalities who have in the past made great contributions to the Company's success and development. Such talks are inspirational and help to awaken an interest and admiration for the great traditions of the Company. They are also instrumental in giving the recruit some conception of the obligations that he has inherited and some idea of the course he must follow if these high standards and ideals are to be maintained.

Other talks are given on various subjects of practical interest and include descriptions of the various native tribes, both Indian and Eskimo, their customs, temperament and general living conditions; canoe transport work; our own transport routes, and general living conditions in the North. These talks proved very popular, and this particularly so in regard to those dealing with matters of historical interest. Arrangements are being considered for a short course of practical instruction in cooking, since a reasonable knowledge of this work is often necessary and of great benefit. When the course is completed the recruits are appointed to various posts where this particular form of assistance is required.

At this stage perhaps the most important fact to note is that "apprenticeship" implies careful supervision and expert training. On this account special consideration is given not only to the posts but also to the training ability of the managers in charge, to ensure that the apprentices will continue to receive proper instruction and develop into well trained fur traders.

Accounting classes are held regularly to prepare the apprentices for this important phase of post management.

The fur grading classes are a feature of the school and the apprentices receive a grounding in the basic fundamentals of fur buying.



Kamloops 1812-1937

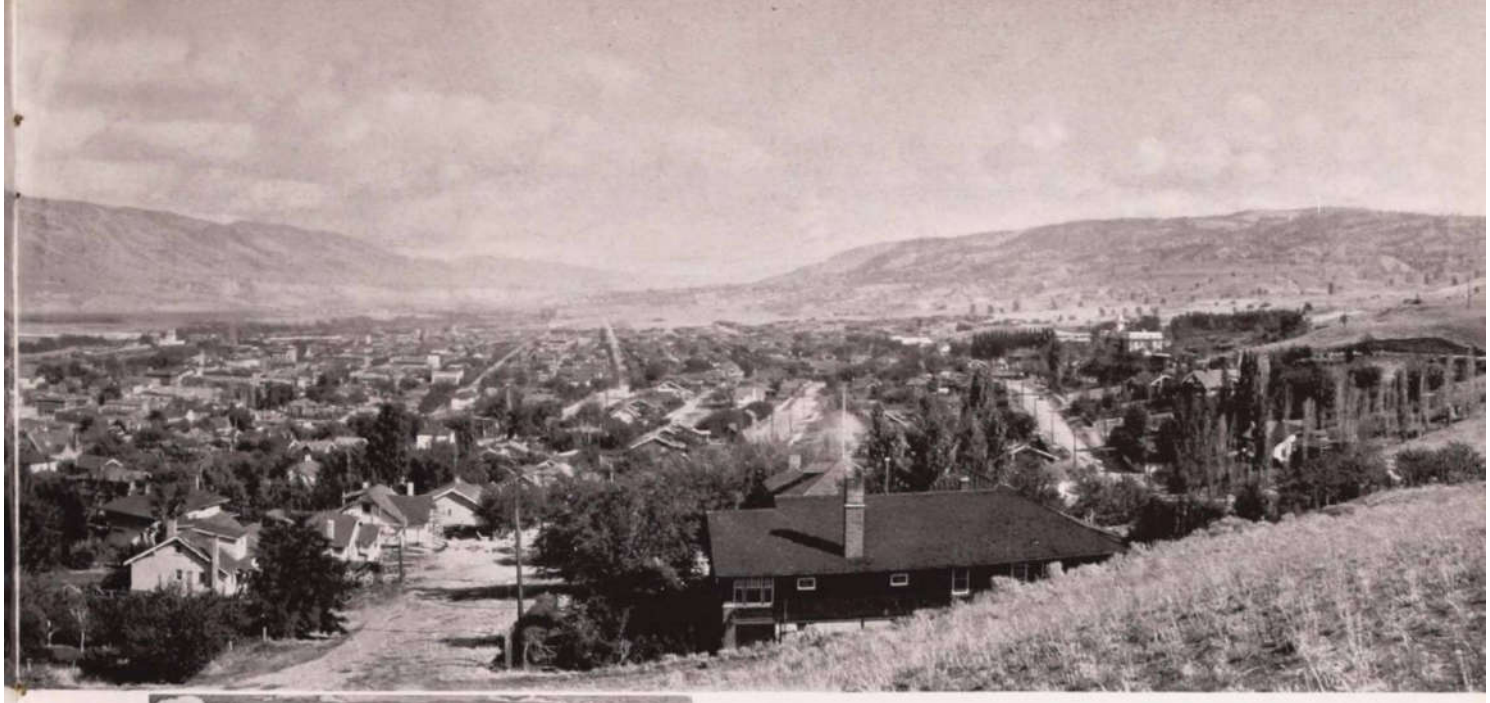
This summer the city of Kamloops is celebrating its one hundred and twenty-fifth birthday. In 1812 a fur trade post, known as Fort Shuswaps, was established on the banks of the Thompson rivers, and from this little settlement has grown a modern city.

THIS year the city of Kamloops celebrates with the Company the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of a settlement in that Central British Columbia district. It was there in 1812 at the confluence of two rivers that the Astoria Company built a fur trade post. This fort was situated on the south shore of the South Thompson river and was known as Shuswaps fort, being named after the local tribe of Indians.

The North-West Company absorbed the Astoria Company in 1813, took over Fort Shuswaps and built a new post on the east shore of the north branch of the river at the confluence. It was named after David Thompson, who, though he never travelled on their waters, has for over a century been credited with the discovery of the Thompson Rivers. This error is attributed to Simon Fraser, who in 1808 descended a river which he thought to be the Columbia. Actually he was on the Fraser river. While travelling he was informed by Indians that white people had lately passed down the "first large river to the left." Fraser presumed that they were referring to David Thompson (who was then in the service of the North-West Company) and his companions. On reaching the Forks (of the Fraser and South Thompson rivers), Fraser assumed that the river flowing from the left was the one referred to by the Indians, and somewhere near the source of it his friends were established. So he named it Thompson's River. In reality Thompson was not on that river, but on the "first large river to the left," the Columbia.

There were a large number of Indians in the Fort Thompson district and the post was attacked on several occasions. Nevertheless, from 1813 till a few years after the Hudson's Bay Company took over the post, the trade in furs increased. After 1821 the beaver began to disappear. Archibald McDonald mentions this in his report on the trade in 1827 as follows: "For this sudden falling off, there is no other pheasable (*i.e.* plausible) way of accounting, than the Beaver run on the verge of extermination, which the

1812



Kamloops, 1937

natives themselves observe, and not only deprecate this loss, but the rapid disappearance of wood animals also." The situation was evidently very serious, because when Sir George Simpson visited Kamloops in 1828 he wrote in his report to the Company in London: "The post of Kamloops, on Thompsons River, is a very unprofitable Establishment, and the principal cause of its being kept up, as the people could be employed to more advantage elsewhere, is the danger to which the New Caledonian outfits and returns would be exposed, from the natives of Thompsons River in passing to and from (Fort) Vancouver, if we were to withdraw from their country. The outfits of this post are brought from (Fort) Vancouver to Okanagan by Boat, and from Okanagan to the Establishment which is situated on the Banks of Thompsons River a distance of about 300 miles, by Horses. The Natives are upon the whole well disposed towards the Whites, but being numerous, it is considered advisable to keep a larger complement of people than the Trade can well afford to guard against accident. . . ."

Even though the trade was lagging, the Company continued to operate a post. In 1842, under the direction of John Tod, a new fort was constructed on the west side of the North Thompson river. The name of the post was changed to Kamloops, which means, "The Meeting Place of Waters." It was a larger fort with several dwellings, a store and other buildings. The palisades were fifteen feet high and were strengthened by two bastions. There was a corral for over three hundred horses which were used to pack supplies from the Okanagan to Kamloops.

Gold was discovered in 1862 in the rivers, streams and lakes of the Kamloops district. Placer mining brought new people into the country. Fur trade was overshadowed and once again the Company moved its fort, this time to the south bank of the South Thompson opposite the confluence. This post was built by Donald McLeod and was right on the trail from Oregon to the gold rivers of the north. Business improved; mining brought many secondary industries. The Hudson's Bay Company's work changed from trading to outfitting, buying produce from "outside" and selling it to the miners.

This wave of prosperity continued, but the road to Kamloops was difficult. Many days were consumed by the pioneer in paddling up fast running rivers, then by pack horse over mountain trails in constant danger of the Shuswaps. Finally, in 1885 the Canadian Pacific Railway arrived, bringing a new era to Kamloops, for the lure of gold so easily washed in the rivers and lakes held the imagination of many "wanderlust" easterners. Hundreds came into the country for only a few short years, during which time huge fortunes were made. By the turn of the century there were two sawmills, a cigar factory, a brick and lime works and a brewery established in Kamloops. The Klondike gold rush brought in more people, outfitting there before going "in" from the Cariboo. Settlers were invading the prairies, and some of them came into the mountains, where the climate is more favourable to certain kinds of farming. The arrival of the C.N.R. made Kamloops a divisional point for both transcontinental lines, and an important railroad centre. But what of the Company during this period of transition? When the

settlement began to grow, business was transferred from the post to store buildings in the centre of the town. Then, in 1912, another move was made to the fine building now occupied, and from this headquarters the Hudson's Bay Company still serves Kamloops.

Being on the main line of the two transcontinental railways, on the trans-Canada highway, and at the confluence of two large rivers, Kamloops is one of the most important inland towns of British Columbia. It is the distributing centre and supply base for the interior, and the market place for all the farmers, cattle ranchers and fruit growers of the Thompson valley and the Cariboo district.

Kamloops is the centre of a very famous agricultural district. The long, open season and the rich grazing plains produce cattle and sheep which rank with the finest. Horse breeding has been a major industry since the "pack trains," and there is a ready market for horses from this district at both coast and prairie points. Wheat raising, dairying and a thriving fruit, vegetable and produce industry all contribute to the business activity of this western city, and there seem to be definite possibilities of it becoming a mining centre in the near future.

The present Kamloops store.

In the centre of beautiful mountain peaks, Kamloops enjoys a very moderate and healthful climate. Besides lovely Riverside Park, overlooking the Thompson rivers, which is the recreation centre with its swimming beach, tennis courts and sports fields, the citizens are fortunate in having excellent mountain trails for riding, and mountain streams full of fighting cold water trout for real fishing.

"Bob and Granny"

The most beloved couple along the Mackenzie river, now enjoying their retirement at Fort Fitzgerald post.

JOHN BARTLEMAN
Manager, Mackenzie-Athabasca District

FOR a quarter of a century but few have gone into the Northwest Territories without meeting Andrew McDermott. For fifty-one years he served the Great Company in the North before he retired at the close of Outfit 266. He knew the North when canoe and York boat carried in merchandise and returned with furs, and when the speed of a dog train was of greater interest than that of an aeroplane is today.

Mr. McDermott is every inch a westerner. Born in Fort Garry on 12th December 1862, he was the grandson of a Selkirk colonist who was a person to be reckoned with in his day, Andrew McDermott, an ambitious Irishman who became the first independent trader at Fort Garry. Today he is remembered in Winnipeg by McDermott Street, which was built on what was part of the McDermott farm.

Mr. and Mrs. McDermott at Fort Fitzgerald

"Bob," for so we must call him (everyone does; but why, they do not know), was educated at St. John's College, the training school for generations of fur traders. Leaving school, he tried farming, but the ordered routine was not to the liking of a descendant of the McDermotts. Then in 1884 he went with his uncle, an independent trader, to Isle a la Crosse. Here "Bob" found a sphere of life to his liking. For one winter he worked with his uncle, and then, on the first of June 1885, he entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company as an apprentice clerk at Green Lake post. Twenty-two years of age at the time, he had behind him much personal experience and the tradition of two generations of Canadian pioneers. This background was a great asset to him, for the year 1885 was a stirring one in the annals of the West. Reil's followers were active in that part of the country in which he was employed. At Green Lake the post was pillaged, and far and wide terror and unrest were rampant. But through it all "Bob" handled a brigade of York boats and took in his merchandise and brought out his furs without mishap.

In 1886 he was transferred to Isle a la Crosse, and after one more year's experience he was promoted to Souris River as manager. Then in 1890 he went back to Isle a la Crosse as district accountant. In 1894 he was at Portage la Loche, then in turn at Lac du Brochet and Pelican Narrows, until in 1912 he was transferred to Fort Fitzgerald. He spent one year, 1917, at Fort Smith, two years at Fond du Lac, one year at Fort McKay and six years at Fort McMurray. In 1929 he went back to Fort Fitzgerald, where he remained for the rest of his service.

This may seem but a dull recital of dates, but to "Bob" the years were full of adventure. He learned the Cree and Chipewyan tongues and to converse fluently in the French of the Metis. He learned to handle canoe, York boat and scow. He kept and took intense pride in his train of dogs, and to this day avers that they were the best that ever galloped over the winter snow. He trapped for fur, and to outwit rival traders in the search for pelts was the spice of life to him. If his trade goods ran short he came home bare of personal belongings. What did it matter if his blanket, axe or kettle went, so long as he had the fur?

In 1888 "Bob" met with his biggest adventure, for, being granted furlough, he went home to Winnipeg. On the way there he stopped at Prince Albert and married Ellen Flett, the *(Continued on page 82*

Fort Smith, where the water route to the Western Arctic begins.

Three Company Posts

Fort Good Hope, photographed by the light of the midnight sun.

Sunday at Lake Harbour, Baffinland.

Fifty Year
on the Mack

This highway to the W
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Photographs by the La

1887

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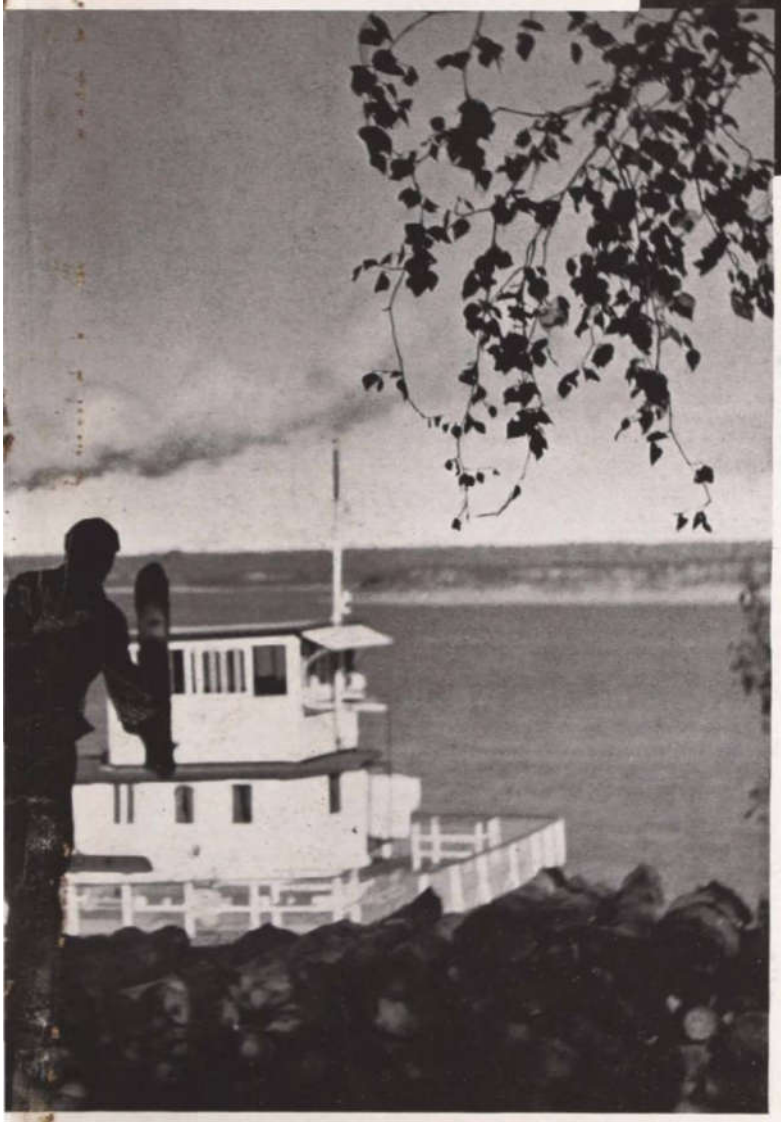


1937

Sir John Franklin's Last Voyage

A brief history of the Franklin expedition and an outline of the researches which established the facts of its tragic outcome.

Sir John Franklin. From a painting by Derby

By

CHIEF TRADER WILLIAM GIBSON, F.R.G.S.

The major feature of this Fur Trade number is William Gibson's article on the Franklin expedition. There is no one today better equipped to write on the subject of the Franklin tragedy than Mr. Gibson. He has been a close student of the subject for many years—and the literature on the Franklin expedition is almost a library in itself—but, what is more important, he has lived twelve years in the Arctic and travelled over those reaches of Arctic coastline along which the Franklin men perished in their attempt to get south. Mr. Gibson's story has literally everything—adventure, tragedy, heroism and the faint colours of shattered romance. The author is in addition responsible for many of the excellent photographs.

The Author

"Not here: the white North has thy bones, and thou,
Heroic Sailor Soul!
Art passing on thy happier voyage now,
Toward no Earthly Pole."[1]

NO pages in the history of discovery present more stirring appeal to the imagination than those dealing with the exploration of the Polar regions. For four centuries a long line of adventurous navigators strove to pierce the gloom which shrouded in mystery those vast areas of ice filled seas and stark repellent lands. Impelled by the dream of a North-west Passage, as a vastly shorter route from the old world to the fabulous markets of the Orient, generation after generation of enterprising mariners pressed their frail vessels again and again into the maelstrom of the Polar floes.

The main assault upon the Arctic regions to the north of the North American continent was in quest of a North-west Passage as a connected and navigable sea leading from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. In execution it was predominantly British. By the commencement of the nineteenth century it had, as an undertaking, virtually passed into the hands of the British Navy. The solution of the age-long problem of the Passage, and the unravelling of that gigantic archipelago which stretches polewards from our northern shores, was generally recognized at that time as an enterprise peculiar to the world's greatest maritime nation.

The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed a succession of great naval expeditions which vigorously pushed their explorations farther and farther into the then unknown recesses of the Arctic. In the history of the North-west Passage this period may be said to have been the high water mark in concentrated effort and achievement. Undeterred by failures or meagre successes, or by the formidable forces of nature which blocked their way, impatient of privations and the exactions of a harsh climate, distinguished Arctic captains in the service strove for appointments and returned repeatedly to employ their skill and leadership in forging a pathway through this icy route to the gates of the Pacific.

The entailed effort was not in any sense continuous in that it was free from interruptions and intervals of time. Dependent upon the preoccupation of the nation in relation to foreign engagements, the state of the national finances, and the recurring revival of public interest, the attempts were of necessity spasmodic.

It was during this period that the first overland journeys through Canada to the shores of the Arctic Ocean were embarked upon. These journeys—which were intended to support and implement the sea voyages—were undertaken by the British Navy, and also by the Hudson's Bay Company. The success of the land journeys in delineating vast stretches of the coastline and adjacent islands, gives rise to question why this method of exploration was not more fully employed in preference to the sea voyages. The answer undoubtedly lies in the fact that Great Britain was the world's leading sea power, and the prosecution of the exploration in the hands of the Royal Navy. Not only was the discovery of the Passage desirable, but an essential motive existed in navigating ships of deep draught through it.

The combined results of the sea voyages and the overland journeys gradually resulted in the foundation of the charts of the North American Arctic. While many huge gaps existed, and the whole lacked cohesion, the success attained acted as a spur to renewed efforts in order to bring to a final solution the stubborn and tantalizing problem. Blocked repeatedly by the huge masses of ice to the westward of the main opening through the archipelago on the 74th parallel, the prosecution of the search by sea was transferred to a more southerly latitude within the littoral waters of the continent. No greater success was achieved in this direction. The theory of an open Polar sea as a highway to the Pacific was proving a fallacy.

Gradually but forcibly the fact became apparent that the North-west Passage—when discovered—could never prove of any value as a seaway for the ships of war or commerce. This was substantially confirmed when Sir John Ross returned to England from his notable voyage in 1831. Forced to abandon his ship, imprisoned in the ice, he made a masterly retreat with his crew after a sojourn of nearly five years in the central portion of the American Arctic. The results of his expedition clearly indicated that a long peninsula, known today as Boothia, extended north from the continent, projecting any possible North-west Passage to the high latitude of the 74th parallel; those very ice infested waters which had repeatedly proved a barrier to progress and success in the past.

The deductions founded upon the discoveries of Sir John Ross were not entirely accurate, for a small narrow strait bisected the peninsula on the 72nd parallel, creating of the northern portion an island, which is known today as North Somerset; but for all practical purposes the inference was plain—the North-west Passage as a commercial project of practical utility was chimerical and ceased to exist.

This realisation, which robbed the discovery of a Passage of the material reward which had hitherto been the main driving force behind the search for its existence, was not to dampen the zeal of the explorers, or lessen the public interest, until the problem was finally solved and victory achieved. The history of the human race is closely associated with man's tireless urge to explore and conquer the most hidden mysteries and unknown recesses of our globe. The quest for the North-west Passage continued with the same support and enthusiasm as before, but the problem had resolved itself into a purely geographical one.

The year 1844 marked in England a recurrence of interest in the final solution of the interminable problem. The time seemed favourable for launching and despatching another expedition to the Polar regions. The country was at peace, and enjoying a high degree of prosperity; ample funds were available in the National Treasury; lay experts and experienced naval officers, as well as the Royal Societies and leading scientists of the day, experienced little difficulty in promoting the undertaking and securing the approval of the Admiralty. So much had already been accomplished by the British over a long period of time, and it was believed so little remained to be done to complete the discovery of the Passage, that the proposed expedition was generally looked upon as a matter of national importance, and indispensable to the prestige of the country and the Royal Navy. The enterprise excited the intense interest and enthusiasm of all classes of people in the country. It was generally felt that a supreme and well conceived effort could not fail to achieve the final victory.

In this atmosphere the Franklin expedition had its inception. It is the history and fate of this expedition which we are about to consider in these pages. The high hopes cherished for its success were never realised, for it resulted in the greatest tragedy in the history of Polar exploration. The fact is established, however, that in the midst of poignant disaster, it solved the last link to which the discovery of the North-west Passage had been then reduced.

In its organisation and equipment the expedition was carefully and elaborately planned and the scope of its activities ambitiously considered. While the nominal object was the completion of the discovery of the North-west Passage as purely a matter of geographical importance—it was decided to combine important contributions to many other branches of science. The fields of proposed investigation included such branches of science as oceanography, geodesy, terrestrial magnetism, botany, ornithology, geology and marine biology.

The ships selected were two stout well-proved vessels of the *bomb-ketch* type. Both had previously served in the Antarctic, while one had also served in the Arctic. The *Erebus* was of three hundred and seventy tons register, and her consort, the *Terror*, of three hundred and forty tons. From a contemporary source we learn the following details of their design and construction: "The *Erebus* was built at Pembroke Dockyard during the years 1824-6. The *Terror* was built in a private yard at Topsham during the years 1812-13. They were of wood, and being designed to withstand the shock of howitzers firing from their decks at high elevation, were exceedingly strongly built. For Polar work, of which they had had their full share, they were still further fortified, their planking 'doubled,' their frames multiplied and their bows and sterns built up internally until they became almost solid masses of wood. As already stated they were flush-decked. They were both three masted, and for their last voyage barque-rigged. They were of great beam in proportion to their length, and exceedingly bluff in the bows, which made them dull (slow and unhandy) in sailing. Their hulls were painted black, their weatherworks (above the water line) yellow, and their masts white."[2]

Both vessels were specially equipped for the voyage with steam engines of twenty horse-power. The screw propeller, which had just been invented and recently improved, featured also one of the up-to-date installations. The *Erebus* and *Terror* were in fact the first vessels to carry this new invention to Arctic waters. In flat calm the auxiliary power was capable of propelling the vessels at the rate of around two knots per hour. We gain some idea of the size of the engines from a letter written by Captain Fitzjames of the *Erebus*. In the humorous style he employed in describing things, he wrote: "Our engine is down alongside. It came drawn by ten coal black horses and weighs fifteen tons."[3]

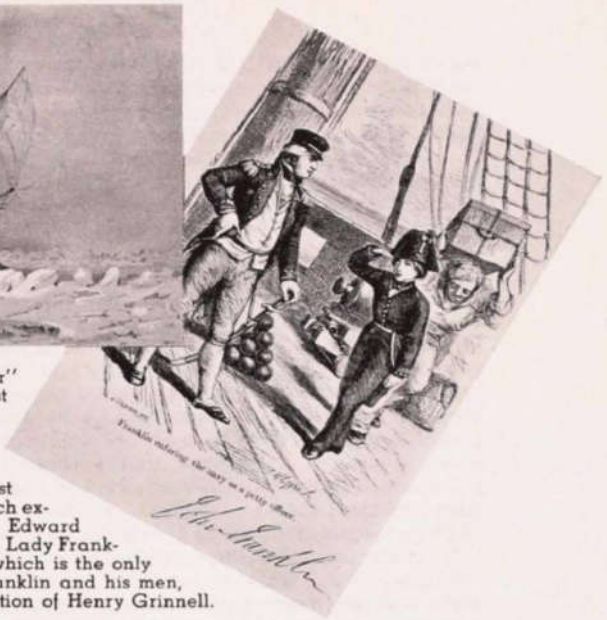
The same care which attended the selection of the vessels and the adoption of the most up-to-date auxiliary motive power, was evidenced in the provision of equipment, stores and instruments. The expedition when completed and ready to put to sea had cost the British Government the considerable sum of £75,981-12-11; a sum far in excess of any previously expended on a single expedition.

Captain Sir John Franklin, a veteran in the field of Arctic exploration, was appointed to the command. He was supported by a very able body of officers, the pick of the entire service. Selecting the *Erebus* to carry his pennant, he took with him as second in command Captain James Fitzjames, a very capable officer who ranked high in the estimation of the Admiralty, but who had no previous experience in the Arctic. Captain F. R. M. Crozier was appointed to command the *Terror*. He had a long record of Polar service to his credit, having served in the three great Arctic voyages of Rear Admiral Parry, as well as in the Antarctic under Captain James Clark Ross.

Sir John Franklin is an imperishable figure in the epochal period of geographical discovery in the Arctic regions of North America. The greater part of his distinguished career was devoted to exploration and the conquest of the North-west Passage. Born at Spilsby, Lincolnshire, in the year 1786, he entered the Royal Navy as a first-class volunteer at the age of fifteen years. Still at this tender age he served in the *Polyphemus* at the action under Nelson before Copenhagen, 2nd April, 1801. The following four years he served in the *Investigator*, a survey ship engaged in charting the western coast of Australia.

It was the influence of this voyage of survey which led him on the way to become later a skilful engineer and geographer of renown. By the year 1805 he was serving on board the famous *Bellerophon* and had charge of the vessel's signals throughout the immortal battle of Trafalgar. During the American War for independence, 1814, he was slightly wounded in the disastrous attempt to capture New Orleans. His first contact with the Arctic ice came in 1818, when as Lieutenant he commanded the *Trent*, which ship, in company with the *Dorothea*, attempted to negotiate a passage across the North Pole by way of Spitzbergen. His conduct and judgment during this voyage won the approbation of the Admiralty, and definitely established his qualities for leadership and resourcefulness in this special sphere of the service.

Sir John Franklin's chief fame, however, lies in his two overland journeys through Canada to the shores of the Polar Sea. These journeys were decided upon as an auxiliary method of prosecuting the discovery of the North-west Passage and mapping the northern coast of the continent. They occupied the years 1819-22 and 1825-27, and resulted in a vast aggregation of knowledge of the Arctic seaboard. In the face of great obstacles and hardships, and in the midst of an unknown and remote territory, they were carried out with remarkable vigour and skill, and gained for him

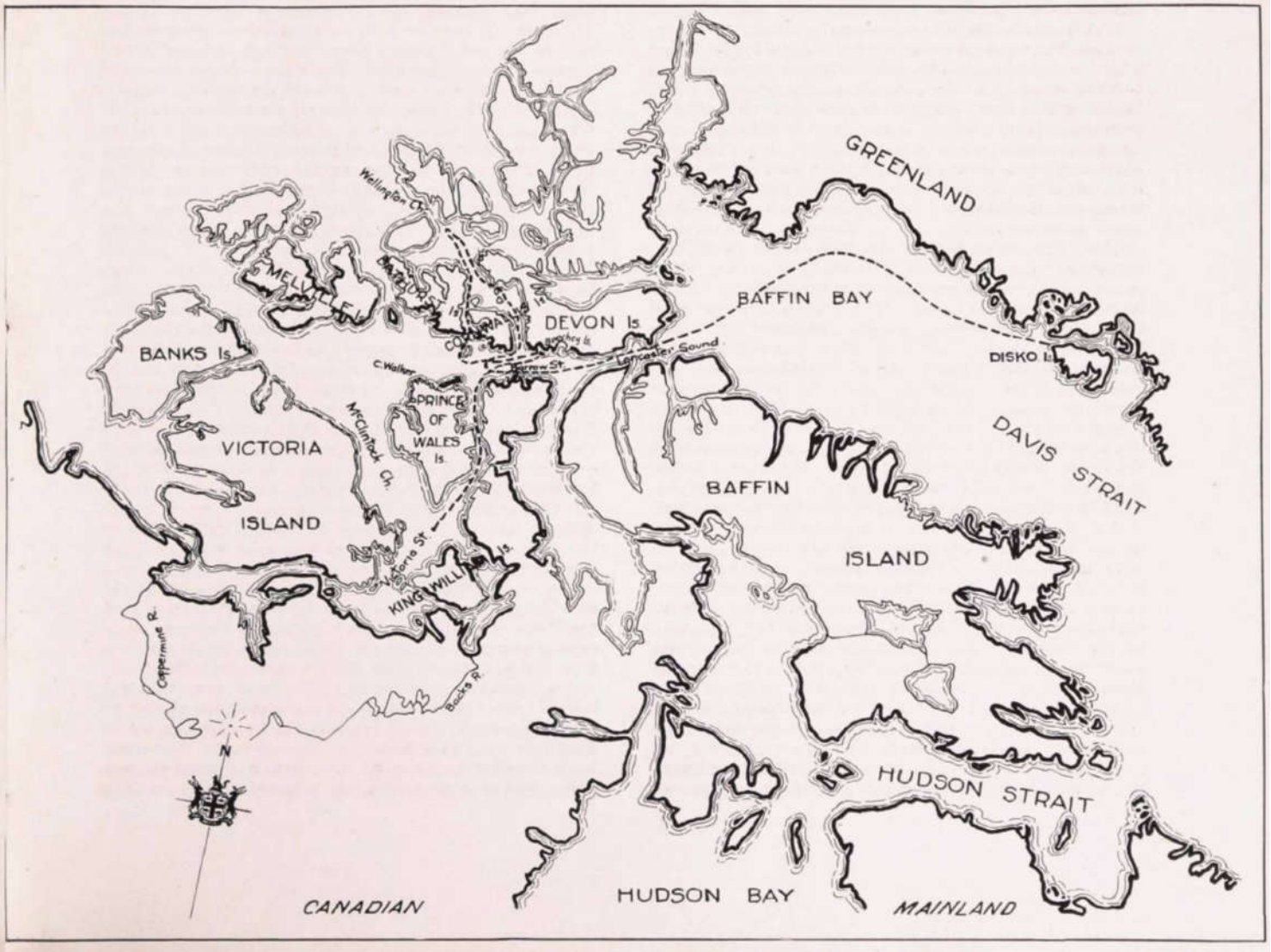


Sketch of the H.M.S. "Terror" in the ice during her first voyage to the Arctic in 1833-34.

Cenotaph at Beechey Island to seamen who lost their lives in the Franklin search expedition under Rear-Admiral Sir Edward Belcher. At its base McClintock placed Lady Franklin's simple tablet in 1858. This tablet, which is the only memorial of its kind on Canadian soil to Franklin and his men, was executed in New York City under the direction of Henry Grinnell.

A sketch of Franklin (bearing his signature) joining the navy at the age of fifteen.

Map of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, a dotted line showing the route of the "Erebus" and "Terror" from Disko Island to the point of abandonment. The coast-line discovered and laid down at the time the Franklin expedition sailed from England is indicated by the thick outline, being a copy of the Admiralty Charts in use in 1844.


GREENLAND
BAFFIN BAY
DISKO I.
DAVIS STRAIT
BAFFIN ISLAND
HUDSON STRAIT
HUDSON BAY
CANADIAN MAINLAND
DEVON Is
Lancaster Sound
Wellington Ch.
MELVILLE I.
BANKS Is
C. Walker
PRINCE OF WALES Is
VICTORIA ISLAND
McClintock Ch.
Victoria St.
KING WILLIAM Is.
Peel Sd.
Crozier Ch.
Cape Felix
Cape Victoria
Cape Crozier
Cape Adelaide
Cape Herschel
Cape Walker
Cape Bird
Cape Hotham
Cape Dalhousie
Cape Parry
Cape Dundas
Cape Garry
Cape Kellett
Cape Lyon
Cape Fullerton
Cape Comfort
Cape Chidley
Cape Farewell
Cape Desolation
Cape Walsingham
Cape Mercy
Cape Dorset
Cape Wolstenholme
Cape Digges
Cape Jones
Cape Henrietta Maria
Cape Churchill
Cape Tatnam
Cape Eskimo

an exalted position in the deliberations of the Arctic Naval Council. Honours came to him in the year 1829, when he was created Knight Bachelor of the Hanoverian Order, and had conferred upon him by Oxford University the degree of Doctor of Civil Law. In 1836 he was elevated to Knight Commander of the Hanoverian Order.

Just before plans were being formulated in 1844 for despatching the expedition in the *Erebus* and *Terror* the following spring, Sir John Franklin returned to England from Van Diemen's Land (as Tasmania was then known), of which colony he had been Governor for several years. Eagerly he sought command of the new enterprise, with the full support of his old colleagues of the Arctic Council. When the Admiralty, who had in mind for the command Captain Fitzjames, raised some objections with regard to Franklin's age and supposed susceptibility to the cold, they were promptly overcome, and he was swept to the command with universal acclaim and satisfaction.

The vessels outfitted at Greenhithe, on the Thames, and by the month of May, 1845, were in readiness to commence the great voyage. The specially selected crews included many ratings who had previously seen service in the Polar regions, and nothing was left undone to ensure that the ships were well found in every way. The scientific results aimed at were well evidenced in the selection of officers, the majority of whom were versed in some particular field of scientific investigation. How heavily such qualifications weighed with the Admiralty may be guessed from the following extract from a letter written by Captain Fitzjames, who was interested in the appointment of the surgeon to the *Erebus:* "Bradford is just the man for the work, being active and energetic, a capital shot and a pleasant fellow. But he is no 'ologist'. He can't stuff birds, give long names to slimy things, or put moss in blotting-paper. However if I have a choice, he is the man".[3] With such scientific deficiencies outside his profession Bradford did not receive the appointment.

Sir John Franklin received his official instructions on May 5th, 1845, and on the 18th of the month the expedition sailed from the Thames. The crews numbered a total complement of one hundred and thirty-four officers and men, and full provisions for a period of three years were carried. After putting into Stromness Harbour, in the island of Orkney, the expedition took its final departure from the British Isles. In order to avoid the vessels being overloaded for the crossing of the Atlantic, they were accompanied by a transport which carried a large share of the supplies. Greatly assisted by favourable winds the ships anchored off Whalefish Island, in Disko Bay, on the west coast of Greenland, within a month from leaving Stromness. Here the supplies were transferred from the transport to the *Erebus* and *Terror*, and the last letters were written home to relations and friends.

From Sir John Franklin's last letter home, written in Disko Bay on the eve of the great adventure, we can gather that he did not share fully in the general optimism at home which prophesied an easy voyage to Bering Strait and the Pacific. He was fully conscious that the problem of centuries was still pregnant with disappointments and stern realities. As a man of deeply religious convictions he was sensible of the need for divine guidance and assistance. Some idea of his thoughts at this time can be gained through his last letter to his close friend, Sir Edward Parry: "Again, my dear Parry, I will recommend my dearest wife and daughter to your kind regards. I know that they will heartily join with many dear friends in fervent prayer, that the Almighty Power may guide and support us, and that the blessing of his Holy Spirit may rest upon us. Our prayers I hope will be offered up, with equal fervour, for those inestimable blessings to be vouchsafed to them, and to all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth. . . ."; and again in his last letter to Lady Franklin: "Let me now assure you, my dearest Jane, that I am amply provided with every requisite for my passage, and that I am entering on my voyage comforted with every hope of God's merciful guidance and protection, and that He will bless, comfort and protect you, my dearest, my very dear Eleanor, dear Sophy, and all my other relatives. Oh, how much I wish I could write to each of them to assure them of the happiness I feel in my officers, my crew, and my ship".[4]

By July 12th the transfer of the supplies was completed, and Franklin, exchanging farewells with the commander of the transport, gave orders for the departure. The combined crews of the *Erebus* and *Terror* now numbered one hundred and twenty-nine souls, for five seamen, for various reasons, were transferred to the transport for return to England. With sails set and yards trimmed to the breeze the veteran ships put out from Disko Bay to complete their last voyage.

Yet this was not their last contact with civilization, for north along the coast of Greenland, in Melville Bay, they met the whaler *Prince of Wales*. Captain Dannett, her master, tells us in his log of the meeting, and of his receiving on board Sir John Franklin and several of his principal officers. "Both ships' crews (he writes) are all well, and in remarkable spirits, expecting to finish the operation in good time. They are made fast to a large iceberg, with a temporary observatory fixed upon it".[5] We have no proper details of that summer's voyaging. Having parted company with the whaler the ships evidently negotiated the ice across Baffin Bay, and passed through Lancaster Sound—the eastern gateway to the North-west Passage. Finding their progress to the westward blocked by the floes in Barrow Strait, probably around 100° longitude West, they ascended the hitherto unexplored Wellington Channel to the northward, penetrating as far as the seventy-seventh parallel of latitude. There too, we may judge, further progress was barred by the ice, and Franklin, in order to be strategically located and in readiness for the dash to Bering Strait the following summer, brought his ships south again. In descending the channel he navigated to the westward of Cornwallis Island—thus laying down its extent and outline—and came to winter quarters in the vicinity of Beechey Island on Barrow Strait.

Judging from the results of preceding naval expeditions, Franklin had reason to be well satisfied with this first season's operations. Not only had his ships successfully penetrated the arena of the Polar ice, but a new channel had been explored to the high latitude of seventy-seven degrees; and he was safely returned from this venture and in secure winter quarters, geographically well placed for prosecuting the main project the following year. His instructions from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty were to set a course from Cape Walker on Barrow Strait direct to Bering Strait, at the entrance to the Pacific. Doubtless Franklin attempted to follow these instructions during both the first and second summers, but progress was impossible due to heavy ice fields. It was not then

known that such a course was impracticable, being barred by the huge land mass of Victoria and Bank's Islands, as well as by the perpetual fields of mountainous ice in the Beaufort Sea. The alternative route instructed by the Admiralty was an attempt by way of the unexplored Wellington Channel. This attempt we know was carried out, with very likely a similar result; we also know to-day that it was no more feasible than the direct attempt from Cape Walker. Eventually Franklin discovered and navigated the principal channel comprising the only practicable North-west Passage.

The following summer the *Erebus* and *Terror* were again assaulting the floes and forging westward. Blocked by the heavy ice in the same locality as during the previous summer, Franklin turned his ships south into the broad opening previously sighted by Parry and named Peel Sound. Penetrating into this new lead he discovered it to be a strait extending away to the southward. No discovery could have commended itself more, for by his previous overland explorations he knew of the existence of open water along the coast of the mainland to the westward. We can conceive of his enthusiasm as this broad channel bore him south towards the ever-nearing explored coastal waters of the continent. The conquest of the centuries old problem would indeed seem within his grasp; but the Arctic was not yet willing to yield to the ambitions of man; even then she was fostering forces which were to crush and utterly destroy these splendid ships and their gallant crews.

The passage south through Franklin Strait—as the lower extension of Peel Sound is known today—was apparently easy and free from any great obstruction; but having reached a point some fifteen leagues in a northwesterly direction from Cape Felix, the northernmost tip of King William Island, progress was arrested by very heavy impenetrable ice. On September 12th, 1846, the ships were, in fact, beset, never again to be released under the guidance of their crews. Unconsciously they had been pressed into the clutches of that formidable stream of heavy perpetual ice which pours into Melville Sound from Beaufort Sea, and extends down McClintock Channel to the shores of King William Island—like a long arm rammed down into the archipelago from the north-west.

The expedition in these circumstances, we can conceive, reconciled themselves to the impossibility of further progress that year, as the short navigational season was rapidly drawing to a close. No undue anxiety would be felt, as many expeditions had before been similarly situated and forced to winter in the pack. The coastal waters discovered and traversed a few years previously by Dease and Simpson, the Hudson's Bay Company explorers, lay only some one hundred miles distant to the southward: the missing connection to complete the discovery of the North-west Passage was figuratively traced. The crews settled down then to spend their second winter in the Arctic ice, immured within the confines of their ships. These long periods of patient waiting and inactivity—in fact for some ten months out of the twelve—while the vessels were frozen fast in the dreary waste of ice, constitute one of the amazing features of the Polar Sea Voyages of a hundred years ago.

Serious developments were in store for the expedition the following year, 1847, at a time when hopes would be ascendant for an early release from the ice and resumption of the voyage. On June 11th, Sir John Franklin, the indomitable commander, died. The summer came shortly but failed to release the ships from the grip of the floes, and the crews were faced with the heart-breaking necessity of enduring a third interminable winter of confinement; and that only a short distance removed from the position of their besetment, for the vessels had drifted slightly to the south and west.

Sir John Franklin died at the age of sixty-one years. We have no details whatever as to the nature or cause of his death, but we do know that it occurred suddenly, and not as the result of any prolonged illness or infirmity, for nineteen days previously he was well.

The following spring, 1848, provisions were getting low, for the ships had been victualled for three years and this period was nearing termination. Apparently there was no certain indication that the ships would be released during the summer which was near at hand, in which event the crews would be faced with imminent starvation. But an even more serious and pressing factor faced the leaders. Mortality had been very high this last year, twenty officers and men having died. This high death-rate during the third winter would indicate that some unusual form of illness was in operation, possibly malnutrition, much more probably that insidious and dreadful disease commonly known as scurvy; with which the crews of the Arctic Naval Expeditions were frequently affected owing to the lack of fresh unpreserved foods.

The ships were—under these conditions—on the point of fast becoming prisons of disease and death. Rather than remain in them and chance their extrication from the ice during the approaching summer, it was decided to abandon them, and retreat by way of Back's Great Fish River to the inland territories of Canada, where there were trading forts, securing game on the way and possibly receiving assistance from the Eskimo aborigines near at hand. Truly a desperate and despairing course of action when we consider the nature of the undertaking. Certainly only some grave factor or combination of circumstances could have precipitated such a hazardous and daring decision. Very possibly not an actual shortage of provisions, but a lack of certain foods containing antiscorbutic properties, so necessary to well-being, which had become exhausted or were non-existent, to the grave detriment and deterioration of the health of the crews. The decision to abandon the ships embraced the evacuation of over one hundred men from a remote point in the Arctic to the nearest outpost of civilization, Fort Reliance, distant some eight hundred and seventy miles within the interior. Inadequately equipped for such a large scale enterprise, subject at the outset to prevail against extreme climatic conditions, and dependent for the urgent replenishment of healthful provisions on the mere chance of securing game, it was an undertaking fraught with grave and far-reaching risks, which we may be assured were at least partially realized before the decision was made.

The slight drift of the vessels to the south-south-west had continued since their besetment—to be precise, they had drifted in the ice on a true course for a distance of fourteen nautical miles, during the nineteen and one-half months of their besetment until the time of their abandonment, slightly less than one and one-half miles per month. From their position on April 22nd, five leagues north-north-west of Victory Point, they were deserted and abandoned to their fate. Three days later the crews, now numbering one hundred and

five souls, landed on the promontory under Captain F. R. M. Crozier of the *Terror*, on whom the command had devolved on the death of Franklin. It will be understood that the explorers on reaching Victory Point believed this land to be a peninsula attached to the North American continent. It was not until the year 1854 that Dr. John Rae proved it to be an island, separated from the mainland to the eastward by the strait which today bears his name. This channel was to become significant in the navigational feasibility of the North-west Passage, for by utilizing it fifty-eight years later, Roald Amundsen owed the success of his enterprise in negotiating the Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific in one continuous voyage. Had Franklin been aware of the existence of this channel doubtless he would have navigated it before risking his ships in the heavy ice to the north and west of the island.

In order to make perfectly clear the loss by death to the expedition up to the date of abandoning the ships, it is established that two seamen and one marine died at Beechey Island during the first winter. No deaths occurred during the second winter, but in June, Sir John Franklin died. During the third winter eight officers and twelve men died, making a total loss through death of twenty-four officers and men. This number added to the one hundred and five souls who landed on Victory Point, completed the total complement of the ships on their departure from Disko Bay, five seamen having returned to England in the transport from that point.

Encumbered as the crews were by their equipment, baggage, and the remaining provisions, as well as by a number of unwieldy boats mounted on heavy sledges, three days were occupied in gaining the shore at Victory Point, only five leagues distant from the ships. The obstruction caused by the heavy floes and the pressure ridges would adequately account for the slow rate of progress; but we may judge from the huge quantity of clothing and other articles which were discovered at Victory Point, that the crews in their debilitated condition were unable to meet efficiently the exactments of such strenuous travel.

Before we rejoin Crozier and his men at Victory Point it is necessary to go back almost a year, to May 24th, 1847, to be exact. On that date a party under Lieutenant Graham Gore had set out from the ships, presumably to make a reconnaissance to the southward in order to ascertain the condition of the ice, and the nature of the channel leading towards the mainland. There would seem to be no doubt that this journey was planned by Sir John Franklin, and had as its principal object nothing less than the actual completion of the discovery of the North-west Passage. Just less than eight years previously Dease and Simpson had pioneered the coastal waters immediately to the south in their small boats the *Castor* and *Pollux*. The *Erebus* and *Terror* were then only some ninety miles distant from these waters, and when Gore had traversed this distance to the neighbourhood of Cape Herschel, the last link in the discovery of the Passage would be completed. In selecting Gore for this important journey, and the honour which its execution signified, we know that Franklin held in high esteem this promising young officer; for in a letter home to Lady Franklin from Disko Bay, he wrote: "The more I see of Gore, the more convinced I am that in him I have a treasure and a faithful friend".[5] Franklin was well aware the North-west Passage was discovered and needed only a sledge journey to consummate the victory. In London, poring over the chart with his advisers before the departure, his forefinger rested on the western entrance to Simpson Strait, and he exclaimed; "If I can but get down there, my work is done, thence its plain sailing to the westward".[4]

Gore in starting out from the ships evidently made land well south of Cape Felix; four miles north of Victory Point he deposited under a cairn a record of a more or less routine nature. It consisted of a stereotyped form issued to the Naval Expeditions for the purpose of recording the arrival of exploring parties at definite points, with spaces for astronomical observations, number and condition of the party, future movements, *et cetera*. At the bottom a notice printed in six languages requested the finder to forward the paper to the Admiralty. But this particular form contained much valuable information as may be judged by a copy of its wording:

"28 May 1847. H.M. Ships Erebus and Terror wintered in the ice in Lat. 70° 05′ N; Long. 98° 23′ W.

"Having wintered in 1846-7 at Beechey Island, in lat. 74° 43′ 28″ N.; long. 91° 39′ 15″ W., after having ascended Wellington Channel to lat. 77°, and returned by the West side of Cornwallis Island.

"Sir John Franklin commanding the Expedition. All well.

"Party consisting of 2 officers and 6 men left the ships on Monday 24th May 1847.

"Gm. Gore, Lieut.

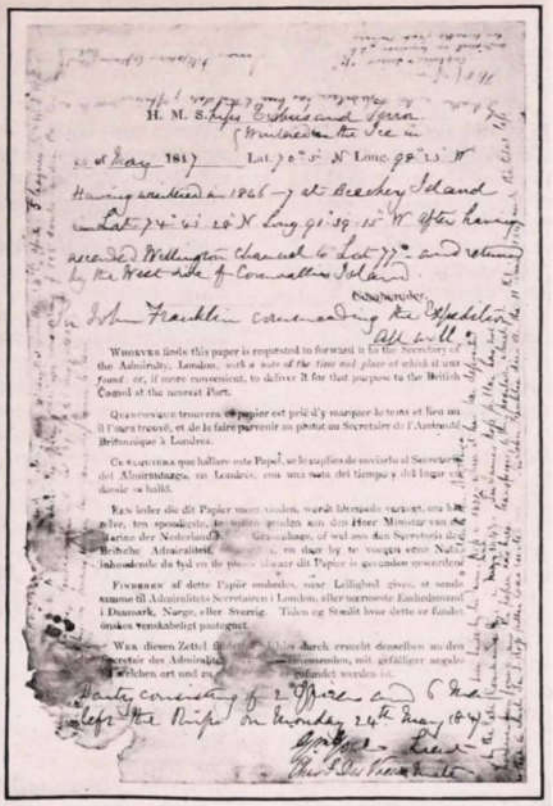
"Chas. F. Des Voeux, Mate."[6]

NOTE—The date given, 1846-47, as the period of wintering at Beechey Island is a clerical error, as a study of the document proves. It should have been 1845-46.—*Author.*

A short distance south along the coast Gore deposited another record, which was an exact copy of the initial one. It is evident that both were written and sealed in tin cylinders before leaving the ships. We have no knowledge as to how the party fared on its important journey, or if it arrived back at the ships before the death of Sir John Franklin. Leading authorities in London afterwards believed that it did, and that Franklin received the intelligence of its success before he died. The belief was so strong that the National memorial erected in Waterloo Place in 1860 depicts Franklin as informing his assembled officers and crews that the North-west Passage had been discovered. Gore left the ships on May 24th and Franklin died June 11th. It is quite feasible that the journey was completed during the intervening eighteen days, but due to the mode of travel employed, and other considerations, it is uncertain to say the least.

We will now return to Crozier and his forlorn band at Victory Point, which they reached within three days of abandoning the ships on April 22nd. The rate of progress, and the effect of the three days march upon the crews, may have acted as a warning to Captain Crozier, and prompted him to place a record here before any further advance was made; a measure which apparently was not intended, but which proved fortunate, for only in this vicinity could it have been preserved for our enlightenment, as will be later apparent. We learn that Lieutenant Irving had secured the record placed four miles to the northward

This fine monument commemorates the life and achievements of Captain Francis R. M. Crozier, R. N., the leader of the ill-fated retreat. It stands in his native town of Banbridge, Northern Ireland. Photo, courtesy of Messrs. W. & G. Baird Ltd., Belfast.



H. M. S. Erebus & Terror and Victory
(Wintered in the Ice in
Lat. 70° 5' N Long. 98° 23' W
Having wintered in 1846 at Beechey Island
Lat. 74° 43' 28" N Long. 91° 39' 15" W after having
ascended Wellington Channel to Lat. 77° and returned
by the West side of Cornwallis Island
Sir John Franklin commanding the Expedition
All well

Whoever finds this paper is requested to forward it to the Secretary of the Admiralty, London, with a note of the time and place at which it was found; or, if more convenient, to deliver it for that purpose to the British Consul at the nearest Port.

Quiconque trouvera ce papier est prié d'y marquer le temps et lieu où il l'aura trouvé, et de le faire parvenir au plutôt au Secrétaire de l'Amirauté Britannique à Londres.

Den, som finder dette Papir, anmodes herved om at indsende det til Secretairen for Admiralitetet i London, med Angivelse af Tid og Sted, hvor det er fundet; eller, dersom det skulde være mere bekvemt, til nærmeste danske Consul.

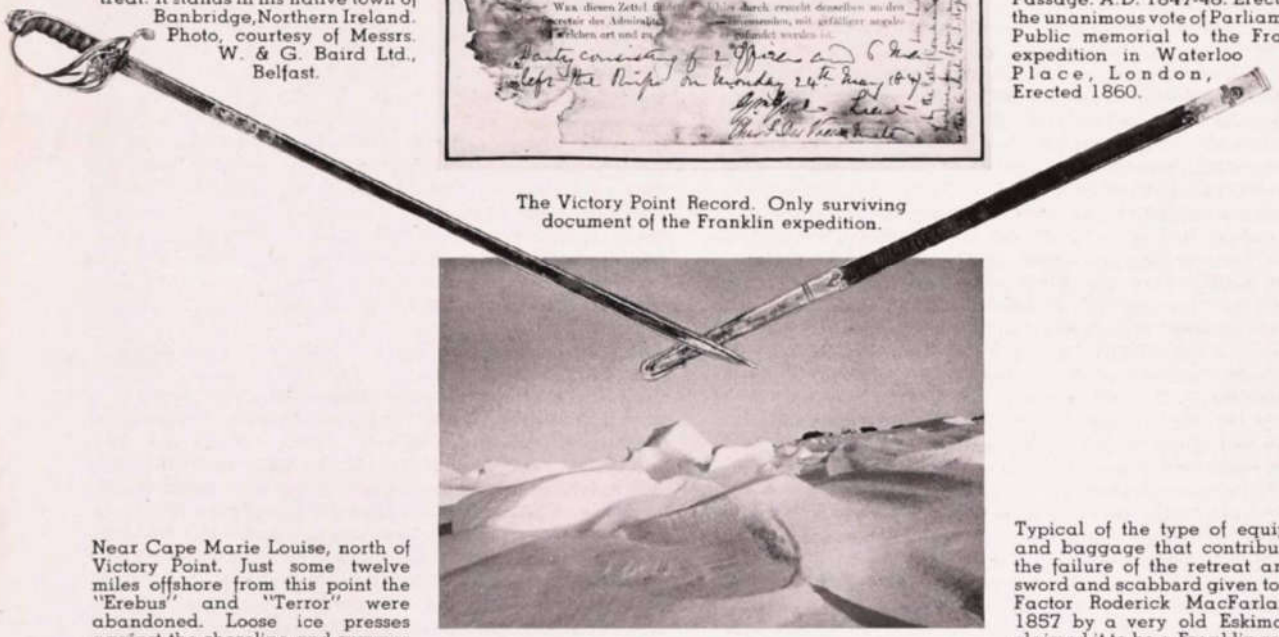
Finnaren av detta Papper anmodas, samt Lolligheit gifves, at sända samma till Amiralitets Secretairen i London, eller närmaste Embetsman i Danmark, Norge, eller Sverrig. Tidens og Stedets hvor dette er fundet anskes venskabeligt paategnet.

Wer diesen Zettel findet, wird durch ersucht denselben an den Secretair des Admiralität in London, mit gefälliger angabe wo und zu welchen ort und zu welcher Zeit er gefunden worden ist.

Party consisting of 2 Officers and 6 Men left the Ships on Monday 24th May 1847.

The Victory Point Record. Only surviving document of the Franklin expedition.

"Franklin, To the great navigator and his brave companions who sacrificed their lives completing the discovery of the North-West Passage. A.D. 1847-48. Erected by the unanimous vote of Parliament." Public memorial to the Franklin expedition in Waterloo Place, London, Erected 1860.

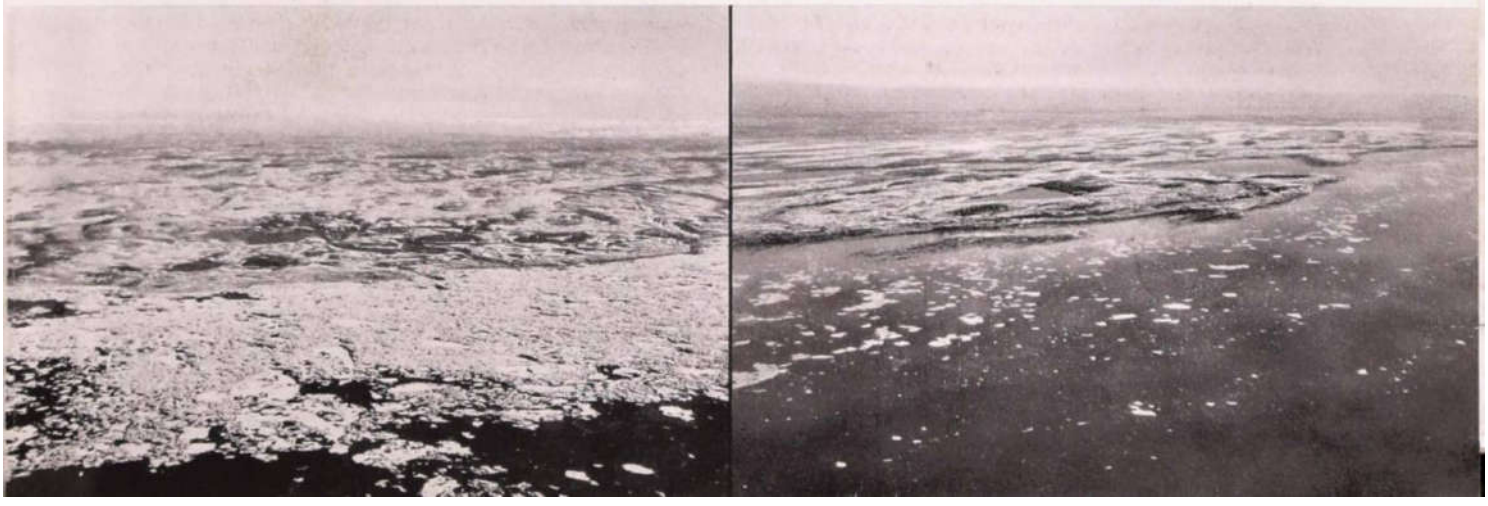


Near Cape Marie Louise, north of Victory Point. Just some twelve miles offshore from this point the "Erebus" and "Terror" were abandoned. Loose ice presses against the shoreline and summer has failed to melt entirely the snow drifts on the land. A fog bank which resembles mountains can be seen in the distance. R.C.A.F. Photograph.

The hard uneven drifts of packed snow which greatly obstructs travel in the spring. Surface conditions such as this confronted the Franklin crews as they hauled by man power alone the heavy sledges containing their boats, equipment and stores.

Typical of the type of equipment and baggage that contributed to the failure of the retreat are this sword and scabbard given to Chief Factor Roderick MacFarlane in 1857 by a very old Eskimo, who claimed it to be a Franklin relic.

Cape Crozier, West coast of King William Island. Named after F. R. M. Crozier, R.N., by Capt. McClintock. R.C.A.F. Photograph.



of the point during the previous spring by the late Commander Gore. By this melancholy prefix to poor Gore's name we know that he too died before the ships were abandoned. What a change in the destiny of the expedition since his "All well" of the previous spring. Captain Fitzjames of the *Erebus* then recorded around the margin of the recovered record the last written words we have that survived the lost expedition. Both of the leaders signed the document, Captain Crozier adding the information concerning the objective they were to head for on the morrow. The following are the marginal words of Fitzjames and Crozier, which give to Gore's record its additional and chief value:

"April 25, 1848. H.M. Ships Erebus and Terror were deserted on the 22nd of April 5 leagues N.N.W. of this, having been beset since 12 of September, 1846. The officers and crews, consisting of 105 souls, under command of Captain F. R. M. Crozier, landed here in latitude 69° 37′ 42″N., longitude 98° 41′ W. A paper was found by Lt. Irving under the cairn supposed to have been built by Sir James Ross in 1831, four miles to the northward where it had been deposited by the late Commander Gore in June (May) 1847. Sir James Ross's pillar has not, however, been found, and the paper has been transferred to this position, which is that on which Sir James Ross's pillar was erected. Sir John Franklin died on June 11, 1847, and the total loss by death in the expedition has been up to this date, 9 officers and 15 men."

F. R. M. Crozier — Captain and Senior Officer.
James Fitzjames — Captain H.M.S. *Erebus*.

and start to-morrow 26th for Back's Fish River."* [6]

It was a formal and concise statement of salient facts without any suggestion whatever of complaint or presage. Despite its official brevity it contained an amazing sum of information on the achievements of the expedition and its ultimate fate. Its discovery eleven years afterward lifted the veil on what might be justifiably alluded to then as a mystery.

Crozier was one of the Arctic veterans, and he alone had perhaps a better understanding of what suffering and sacrifice lay ahead. We can well picture his tragic feelings at this time as he headed his men in that praiseworthy endeavour to save their lives.

The following day, the 26th, the party, after discarding a large portion of their less useful baggage, continued the march, and proceeded painfully and slowly down the gloomy and scattered coast, keeping well inshore where the ice was smoother. Almost immediately death commenced taking toll. At first there was some form of burial, but as mortality gained momentum, and the survivors became weaker, they were left where they expired, in the camping places, or on the march where they fell.

Some idea of their hardships and tribulations may be gained when we consider that at this period of the Arctic year winter conditions still prevail if somewhat modified. For the first week in May over a period of years, the Hudson's Bay Company meteorological records at King William Island disclose an average maximum temperature of 14° F.; and an average minimum temperature of −9°F. Hence it is plain that even when the sun is at its highest during the day, the temperature is well below the freezing point, while during nights it registers several degrees below zero. The surface of the land and sea is covered with the snows of winter, unevenly packed by the violence of the winds in serrated drifts of cement-like hardness, and without as yet any suggestion of melting. The milder temperatures of spring greatly affect visibility, being conducive of fog and haze on days which would be otherwise clear and fine. The intensity of light produced by the action of the sun's rays on a uniformly white surface, causes a blinding glare from which it is imperative to protect the eyes by artificial means. The use of glass goggles constitutes a decided handicap in the case of bodily exertion, as they become diffused with moisture which rapidly freezes and obscures visibility. If the tendency to dispense with their use is not successfully resisted, snow-blindness will quickly result, causing partial or complete incapacitation for further travel. Surprising as it may seem, thirst is another condition—dependent upon the degree of exertion put forth—to be contended with at this season of the year. Relief can only be obtained by camping and laboriously melting snow by artificial means.

Under such climatic conditions Franklin's men struggled along; natives to the temperate climate of the British Isles, and many of whom were for the first time travelling on foot in the Arctic regions. Clad in woollens, with heavy naval broadcloth uniforms and felt boots, they not only suffered from the cold and the driving winds, but also from the condensation and freezing of the garments during inactivity; a condition conducive of very enervating effects in even the most physically fit.

It is by no means difficult for the practised traveller of to-day in these latitudes—with his modern equipment and the accumulated experience of the Eskimos, as well as of his own race, at his command—to visualise the tremendous handicaps to which Crozier and his unwieldy band were subjected. The utter unsuitability and hardship of the woollen clothing and commercial footwear. The exhausting labour of hauling numerous tons of provisions, equipment, and boats, over a rough and uneven surface by man power alone. The immense problem of camping, commissariat, and hospitalization arrangements. The inimical effect of a blizzard of three or four days duration on organized progress. The weakening of the men under the strain of such physical distress, and the ravaging effects of scurvy, for they were powerless to arrest the logical course of the subtle disease.‡ The final disintegration of the retreat as exhaustion and death depleted the sledge crews and disorganised the straggling and enfeebled column.

Scurvy undoubtedly played a leading role in the destruction of the Franklin expedition. There exists substantial evidence to point to this conclusion. The disease was the devastating foe of every naval expedition of that period. The essential value of vitamines in food was then unknown, and the cause of the

*There is one point in the document which calls for elucidation. Fitzjames refers to Graham Gore as "the late Commander Gore," yet we know that Gore left England with the rank of Lieutenant, and while signing the document on the 28th of May, 1847, while on his sledge journey, recorded his rank at that time as Lieutenant. It is unlikely that Fitzjames was in error as to the rank of an officer serving with him in the same ship, and it must therefore be inferred that Gore was promoted following his return from the sledge journey. Sir John Franklin, as commander of the expedition, was most likely vested with authority, under special circumstances, to award promotion for conspicuous service. The significance of this promotion—which is indeed evident—lends strong support to the theory that Gore had returned to the ships with his party, bringing the intelligence of the consummation of the North-west Passage, before the death of Sir John Franklin. This signal event would explain the circumstances which influenced Franklin in exercising his prerogative in promoting Gore.

‡"Scurvy (Scorbut) is an illness due to an improper dietary, the cause of which is now attributed to the lack of vitamines in the food. These vitamines are to be found in fresh meat, and, more especially, in vegetables, but they are destroyed by unsuitable preservation. Thus they are not to be found in salt meat which previously constituted the chief food of Arctic expeditions. The illness manifests itself by tiredness and weakness, often accompanied by pains similar to rheumatism, haemorrhage under the skin, sores on the legs, often also on internal organs, and a peculiar affection of the mouth with swollen, tender and delicate gums, which give rise to haemorrhage and wounds and, occasionally, a loosening of the teeth. The treatment of the illness is hygienic dietetic (fresh vegetables). In severe cases death follows general exhaustion or is caused by complications, especially affections of the lungs."[7]

disease imperfectly understood. Eleven years later than the Franklin expedition, we read of a commander in the Arctic finding cause for congratulation in the fact that he was so well provided as to be able to serve preserved meat to his men twice during each week. Despite the fact that the process of canning was crude at that time, when compared with modern methods, it is difficult to understand why such large quantities of salt meats were carried, especially as it seems to have been recognised that the salted variety increased the gravity of the malady.

Of the preserved meat supplied to the *Erebus* and *Terror* there are unmistakable indications that a large portion of it was unfit for consumption through faulty canning. The meat was packed in twenty-five pound containers, which were painted blue and stencilled "Goldner's Patent". A huge quantity of these containers were found later at Beechey Island, where the expedition spent its first winter, so many in fact that such a large quantity of preserved meat would scarcely have been used during the period of time involved. From this circumstance, and the fact that an enormous quantity of the same product supplied to the Navy at home was subsequently found to be unfit for consumption, it is inferred that the contents of most of the containers found at Beechey Island had been condemned on the same grounds. Admiral Sherard Osborn, in a few words which are well worth quoting, summed up the significance of this lamentable factor in the fortunes of the expedition: "Sad it is to record it, but nearly all their preserved meats were those of the miscreant 'Goldner'. This alone would lead to the disastrous fate of the expedition, by so crippling their resources by condemning them to a diet of salt meats".[3]

It is not the purpose of this paper to touch on the many expeditions, both public and private, British and American, which engaged in the search for the missing explorers during the following five years in which their fate remained a mystery. These search and relief expeditions, and the magnificent humanitarian effort involved, have no counterpart in maritime annals, although they failed ostensibly in their object. Entering the Arctic Sea from the Pacific as well as from the Atlantic Oceans, no fewer then sixteen sea expeditions took part in the search. Two of these consisted of four ships each; seven of two ships each; and seven of single ships. Seven supporting transports assisted the expeditions by transporting supplies to the scene of activity. Five overland expeditions also took part in the search, and it resulted to the credit of the fifth of these to gain the first tidings of the fate of the lost expedition.

The cost to the British Government of the search and relief expeditions amounted to £675,000. In addition to this large outlay, private citizens—notably Lady Franklin—expended the sum of £35,000 on further expeditions. The United States Government expended the sum of $150,000 on search expeditions conducted by the U. S. Navy; while a private citizen, Henry Grinnell of New York City, contributed nearly $100,000 to the organisation of private expeditions. We owe to the discoveries of these many expeditions the completion of the geography of Arctic North America, substantially as it is laid down on the charts of to-day. What circumstances, we may ask, prevented such an exhaustive search from alighting on the scene of the final enactment of the Franklin expedition? This took place in a secluded area of the central Canadian Arctic, far south of the routes embodied in the instructions to Sir John Franklin from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. The thought was not entertained in official quarters that the expedition could possibly be in this area. For this reason no special efforts were directed towards its examination. When the suggestion to investigate the vicinity of the mouth of Back's Great Fish River was finally brought up, the Arctic Council was adamant in its opposition to wasting an expedition on this particular area. We find Sir George Back, a member of the Council, and the discoverer of the river, writing the Secretary of the Admiralty in the following words: "You will be pleased, Sir, to impress on my Lords Commissioners that, I wholly reject all and every idea of any attempts on the part of Sir John Franklin to send boats or detachments over the ice to any point of the mainland in the vicinity of the Great Fish River".[8] Yet it was as we know precisely to the mouth of this river that Franklin's officers attempted to lead their men on abandoning the ships.

By the year 1854 England was in the throes of the Crimean War and the Government absorbed in the vital issues of the terrible campaign. No hope could be then entertained that any of Franklin's men were still alive. Accordingly, the public search expeditions came to a close, and Sir John Franklin and his officers and men were struck off the Navy List. Franklin's rank at this time was that of a Rear Admiral of the Blue, for he had been promoted—in the course of seniority—on 26th of October, 1852. The promotion in actuality was posthumous, for his death had taken place over five years previous to this date.

Public interest in the expedition, and speculation and concern as to its fate, did not fade with the passing of the years until the coming of the War. "Franklin's name was not forgotten. . . . That was to come later with the Crimean War. The protracted bungle which had been called, more truly than judiciously, 'Stratford Canning's Revenge' gave the public its fill of fresh interests. What were the lives of one hundred and thirty miserable seamen, dead no doubt long ago, compared with the magnificent idiocy of Balaclava? The 'four miles of beds' eighteen inches apart, down which the Lady of the Lamp walked every night, and the slow eliciting (by the Roebuck Committee) of the stories of the cargoes of boots 'all for the left foot', and the innumerable other cases of that ineptitude, crass stupidity and peculation, which invariably make their appearance whenever this country draws the sword".[2]

The Admiralty, engrossed in the prosecution of the War, washed its hands of the Franklin expedition on striking the names of its members from the Navy List. By doing so it was entitled to no degree of censure; the probability of any survivors being still alive was then definitely past; for five years, at great public expense, it had sent out expedition after expedition to search for and succour the missing explorers; it was no longer a matter of saving human life, and no justification existed for diverting men and ships for a lesser purpose at a time when the whole nation was aroused at the suffering and appalling death roll in the Crimea Peninsula.

It was left to private enterprise to discover and seek to elucidate the fate of the missing expedition. From this point we will proceed to review the results of those investigators who examined the area of the tragedy, after the first mournful tidings had been gleaned from the Eskimos.

PART II

But never back from out that waste of snow,
Came the far footsteps of those weary brave;
The drifting sleet, the bitter west winds blow,
To hide their graves.[3]

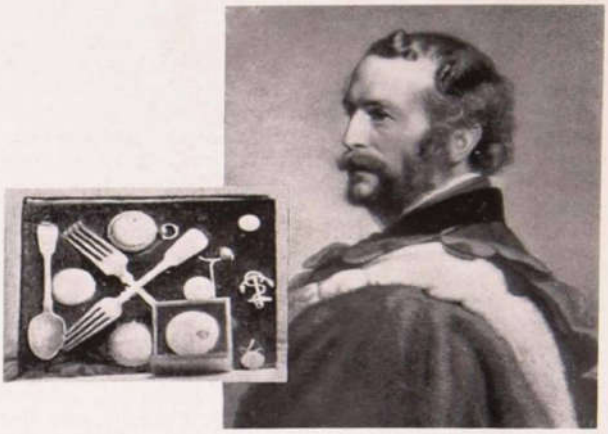
Dr. John Rae was a surgeon in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company and a noted Arctic explorer of his period. He engaged repeatedly in the search for the missing expedition by overland methods in the western area of the Canadian Arctic. Approaching the central portion of the Canadian Arctic on one of these journeys he was unknowingly within a degree of the position of the ships when abandoned. Looking eastwards across the expanse of ice-filled sea which separates Victoria Island from King William Island, it was he who named it "Victoria Strait".

Approaching the central Arctic again, this time from Hudson Bay to the eastward, in the year 1854, he gained from the Eskimos the first tidings of the fate of the Franklin crews. His expedition on this occasion had a dual purpose, for he planned on completing the outline of the coast to the southwest of Boothia Isthmus. Crossing the land to the south of the Isthmus from Prince Regent Inlet, he linked up with Dease and Simpson's farthest from the west. It was at this time that he discovered King William Land to be an island; a fact that would have been of inestimable value to Franklin eight years previously, and might well have averted the disaster which befell his expedition.

The sum of information obtained by Dr. Rae from the Eskimos is contained in his report to the secretary of the Company. It must be borne in mind that the Eskimos concerned had no actual experience or contact with the Franklin expedition, but had gained the knowledge they related from their countrymen to the westward who had. Progressing to the westward in the vicinity of Pelly Bay during the month of April, Dr. Rae related his meeting with the first Eskimos to respond to the intelligence he sought: "Having taken some of the lading off Ouligbuck's sledge, (he writes) we had barely resumed our journey when we were met by a very intelligent Esquimau, driving a dog's sledge laden with musk ox beef. This man at once consented to accompany us two days journey, and in a few minutes had deposited his load on the snow, and was ready to join us. Having explained my object to him he said that the road by which he had come was the best for us, and having lightened the mens' sledges we travelled with more facility. We were now joined by another of the natives who had been absent seal hunting yesterday, but being anxious to see us, had visited our snowhouses early this morning, and then followed up our tracks. This man was very communicative, and on putting to him the usual questions as to him having seen 'white men' before, or any ships or boats, he replied in the negative; but said, that a party of 'white men' had died of starvation a long distance to the west of where we then were, and beyond a large river. He stated that he did not know the exact place; that he had never been there; and that he could not accompany us so far".

"The substance of the information then and subsequently obtained from various sources was to the following effect:

"In the Spring, four winters past (1850) whilst some Esquimaux families were killing seals near the north shore of a large Island named in Arrowsmith's charts, King William's Land, about forty white men were seen travelling in company southward over the the ice, and dragging a boat and sledges with them. They were passing along the west shore of the above named Island. None of the party could speak the Esquimaux language so well as to be understood, but by signs the natives were led to believe that the ship or ships had been crushed by ice, and that they were then going to where they expected deer to shoot. From the appearance of the men (all of whom with the exception of one officer were hauling on the drag ropes of the sledge and were looking thin) they were then supposed to be getting short of provisions, and they purchased a small seal or piece of seal from the natives. The officer was described as being a tall, stout, middle-aged man. When their day's journey terminated, they pitched tents to rest in."



Dr. John Rae, F.R.S., the noted Hudson's Bay Company surgeon-explorer, with some of the relics he purchased from the Eskimos who gave him the first tidings of the fate of the Franklin expedition. National Portrait Gallery photo.

"At a later date the same season but previous to the disruption of the ice, the dead bodies of some thirty white persons, and also some graves, were discovered on the continent, and five dead bodies on an island near it, about a long day's journey to the north-west of the mouth of a large stream, which can be no other than Back's Great Fish River, (named by the Esquimaux Oot-koo-hi-ca-lik) as its description and that of the low shore in the neighbourhood of Point Ogle and Montreal Island agree exactly with that of Sir George Back. Some of the bodies were in a tent or tents, others were under the boat which had been turned over to form a shelter, and some lay scattered about in different directions. Of those seen on the island, it was supposed that one was that of an officer (chief) as he had a telescope strapped over his shoulders, and his double barrelled gun lay underneath him. . . . ."

"There appears to have been an abundant store of ammunition, as the gunpowder was emptied by the natives in a heap on the ground out of the kegs or cases containing it, and a quantity of shot and ball was found below high water mark, having probably been left on the ice close to the beach before the spring thaw commenced. There must have been a number of telescopes, guns (several of them double barrelled), watches, compasses, *et cetera*, all of which seem to have been broken up, as I saw pieces of these different

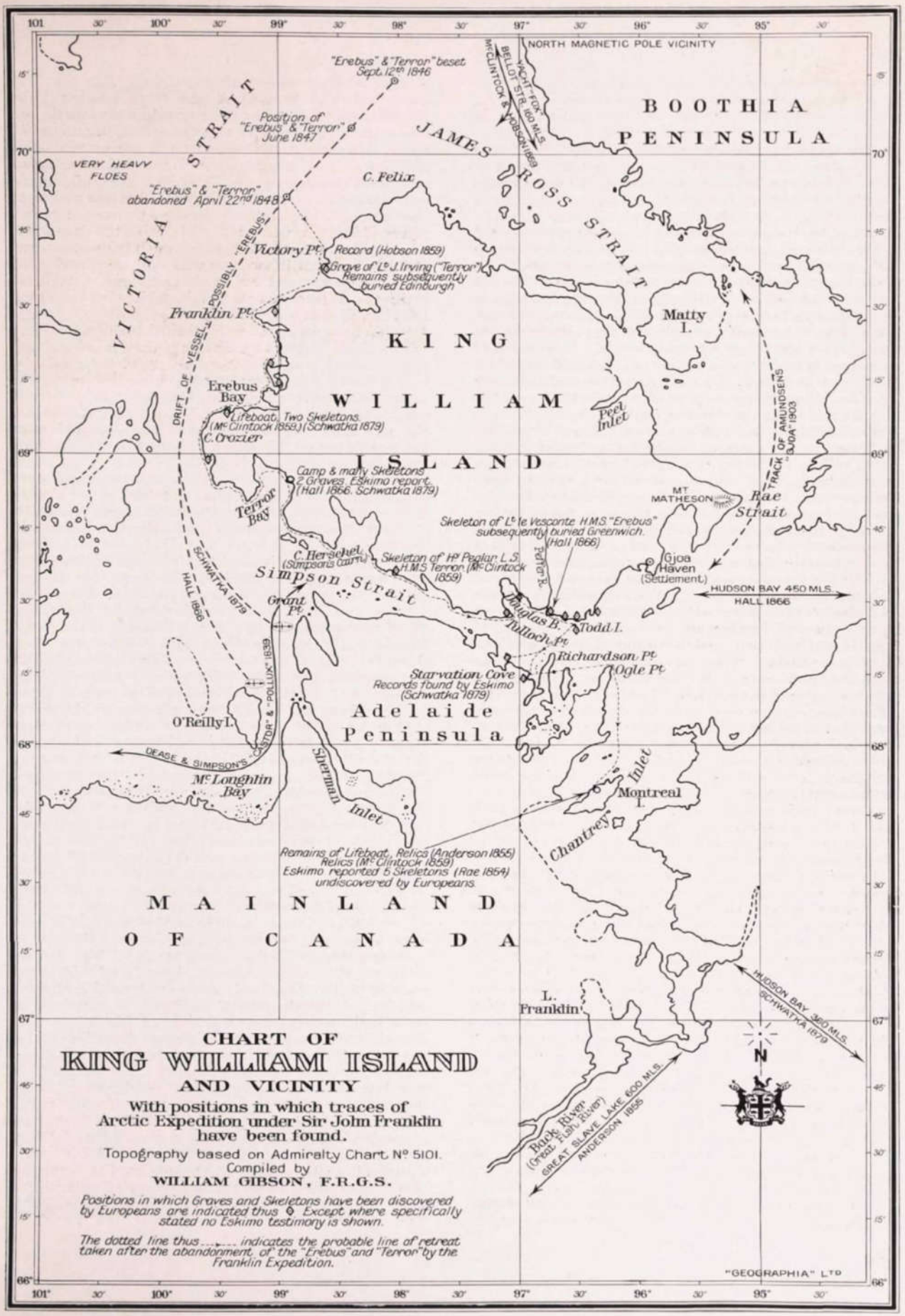


CHART OF KING WILLIAM ISLAND AND VICINITY

With positions in which traces of Arctic Expedition under Sir John Franklin have been found.

Topography based on Admiralty Chart No 5101.

Compiled by

WILLIAM GIBSON, F.R.G.S.

Positions in which Graves and Skeletons have been discovered by Europeans are indicated thus ◊ Except where specifically stated no Eskimo testimony is shown.

The dotted line thus ..... indicates the probable line of retreat taken after the abandonment of the "Erebus" and "Terror" by the Franklin Expedition.

articles with the natives, and purchased as many as possible, together with some silver spoons and forks, an order of merit in the form of a star, and a small silver plate engraved 'Sir John Franklin, K.C.H.' "*

"None of the Esquimaux with whom I had communication saw the white men, either when living or after death, nor had they ever been at the place where the bodies were found, but had their information from natives who had been there, and who had seen the party when travelling over the ice. From what I could learn there is no reason to suspect that any violence had been offered to the sufferers by the natives." [9]

It may be a cause of speculation why Dr. Rae did not proceed to Back's Great Fish River to investigate on the spot, before returning to his base at Repulse Bay. This would have necessitated the prolongation of his journey well into the summer months; a period of the year when it would have been impossible for him to return to Hudson Bay owing to the melting snow and ice. His resources would not allow of the undertaking and he had perforce to content himself with the information he had obtained, and the indubitable evidence in the shape of relics which supported it.

It will be noted that in the Eskimos' accounts the retreating party of white men were reported to have been seen on the west coast of King William Island, in the spring, four years previous (1850) to the interview with Dr. Rae. In this statement the natives were undoubtedly in error, for we know that the retreat took place six years previously (1848).

The arrival of Dr. Rae's report in London revived interest in the fate of the Franklin expedition, but the Admiralty were committed to a definite policy with regard to any further public search expeditions. It contented itself with requesting the Hudson's Bay Company to undertake the burden of verifying the information contained in the report by investigating the area around the mouth of Back's Great Fish River. The Company lost no time in acceding to this request, and by the spring of the following year, 1855, had an expedition organised at Great Slave Lake, with the ostensible object of despatching it in canoes down the Back River as soon as the season was sufficiently advanced.

James Anderson, a Chief Factor and experienced officer of the Indian Territory, was appointed to the command of the party. On the 26th of June he led it forth on its long journey to the sea. Working its way through numerous ice scattered lakes and across portages it reached the source of the Great Fish River in Lake Alymer on the 11th of July. Then commenced the dangerous descent—intercepted by many portages —of this rock strewn and tortuous stream which winds through the Barren Lands and empties into the Arctic Sea.

When within a short distance of the sea the party came across a number of Eskimos and made its first contact with the object of its journey. "On the 30th July (writes Anderson) at the Rapids below Lake Franklin, three Esquimaux Lodges were seen on the opposite shore, and shortly after an elderly man crossed to us. After the portage was made we crossed over and immediately perceived various articles belonging to a boat, such as tent poles and kayack paddles made out of ash oars, pieces of mahogany, elm, oak and pine; also copper and sheet iron boilers, tin soup tureens, pieces of instruments, a letter nip, with the date 1843, a broken hand saw, chisels *et cetera*. Only one man was at the lodges, but the women who were very intelligent made us understand by words and signs, that these articles came from a boat, and the white men belonging to it had died of starvation".

"We of course by showing them books and written papers endeavoured to ascertain if they possessed any papers, offering to give them plenty of the goods we had with us for them; but though they evidently understood us, they said they had none; they did not scruple to show us all their hidden treasures. Besides the man there were three women and eight children; the remainder of this party, two men and three lads were seen towards evening."

"Point Beaufort was reached on the 31st; we were detained there the next day until 2-30 p.m. by a S.W. gale; we then took the traverse to Montreal Island, to seaward the ice appeared perfectly firm and unbroken. . . ."

"We had thus arrived at the first spot indicated by my instructions, on precisely the same day as our gallant predecessor, Sir George Back."

"The two next days were devoted by the entire party to the examination of the Island and the small islands in the vicinity. On a high ridge of rocks on the S.E. point of the Island a number of Esquimaux caches were found and besides seal oil, various articles were found belonging to a boat or ship, such as chain hooks, chisels, blacksmith's shovel and cold chisel, tin oval boiler, a bar of unwrought iron about three feet long . . . . small pieces of rope, bunting, and a number of sticks strung together, on one of which was cut 'Mr. Stanley' (?surgeon of *Erebus*). A little lower down was a large quantity of chips, shavings, and ends of plank of pine, elm, ash, oak and mahogany, evidently sawed by unskilful hands; every chip was turned over and on one of them was found the word *Terror* carved. It was evident that this was the spot where the boat was cut up by the Esquimaux. Not even a scrap of paper could be discovered, and though rewards were offered, and the most minute search made over the whole Island, not a vestige of the remains of our unfortunate countrymen could be discovered." [10]

Following this disappointing result of his examination of Montreal Island, Anderson and his party crossed to the mainland to the westward and continued the investigation of the coast as far north as Ogle Point. The only further trace of the missing expedition found consisted of a piece of codline and a strip of striped cotton. The sea was filled with moving pans of ice which greatly hindered the movements of the then weak and leaky canoes. Finally abandoning them, with two Iroquois to effect repairs, the party took to the land carrying a light Halkett boat and succeeded later in crossing to Maconochie Island. They were unable to cross over to Richardson Point to the westward, as the strait which separated it from the island was filled with ice driving through it at a fearful rate.

*List of articles purchased from the Eskimos by Dr. Rae:
13 Silver table forks with crests or initials.
3 Silver table spoons with crests.
2 Silver tea spoons with crests or initials.
2 Silver desert spoons with initials.
1 round silver plate engraved "Sir John Franklin K.C.H."
The decoration of the Order of Merit in form of a Star.
1 gilt silver pocket chronometer and dial.
2 pieces of gold watch cases.
7 pieces silver pencil cases.
1 piece of silver tubing.
1 piece of optical instrument.
1 gold cap band.
2 pieces of gold watch chains.
2 sovereigns, 1 half crown, 4 shillings.
2 leaves of the "students' manual."
1 surgical knife, 1 shoemaker's knife.
1 scalpel, 1 pocket compass box.
2 narrow tin cases with name and initials.
2 sailors knives.
sundry articles of lesser note.[9]

Had the party been able to advance a short distance to the westward, and been attracted to that small indentation in the coast known to-day as Starvation Cove, they would have made a startling discovery to consummate their quest in the presence of many skeletons there. "It was now evident (continues Anderson) that all that could be done with our means had been accomplished and that with our frail craft, any delay in returning would compromise the safety of the whole party. It may be thought strange that the remains of so large a party could not be discovered. It is my opinion that a party in a starving condition would have chosen a low spot, where they could have hauled their boat up and have had some shelter, and that if they perished there that their bones have long since been covered by sand or gravel forced up by the ice. Any books or papers left open would be destroyed by the perpetual winds and rain in this quarter in a very short space of time". Anderson had of necessity to be satisfied with the meagre results obtained. Heading his party back up the Great Fish River he reached Fort Reliance on the 11th of September.

The nature of this journey, which assured only a modicum of time in which to achieve any comprehensive results and precluded any exhaustive or extensive investigation, resulted only in verifying the Eskimo reports obtained by Dr. Rae, without throwing any further light on the mystery. The disappointment of the enterprise lay, not in its execution, but in its restricted scope. It was confined to a rapid dash by canoe from Great Slave Lake to Montreal Island, and back again, during the few short weeks of summer when such a passage is possible.

Four more years were to elapse before the main facts were to be ascertained; and then through the instrumentality of Lady Franklin. To her exertions and pecuniary sacrifice were due the organisation of the expedition which discovered the fate of her husband and his companions. With the assistance of private donations she purchased the steam yacht *Fox*, and reconditioned it for Arctic service. To the credit of the Admiralty it must be recorded, that while taking no part in the proposed voyage, it assisted materially through the loan of special equipment and instruments, and the donation of a quantity of stores which were lying in the Naval Dockyards from former Arctic voyages. Perhaps its greatest contribution lay in the granting of leave-of-absence to the several officers and men of the Navy who principally comprised the crew. Lady Franklin intrusted the leadership of this, the last expedition to sail from England in quest of her husband's fate, to Captain Francis Leopold McClintock, R.N. (afterwards an Admiral, a knight, and a towering figure in the field of Arctic exploration).

Following its departure from England the fortunes of the expedition were at first inauspicious, and the small vessel had a long and severe contest with the ice fields. Fourteen months elapsed before it reached Bellot Strait—a point some two hundred miles north of King William Island—during the summer of 1858. This was the nearest approach McClintock was enabled to make in his ship towards the scene of the disaster. From this location he was obliged to prosecute his mission on foot during the following spring.

Before we follow McClintock to the Great Fish River we may pause to consider one dominant factor which complicated the search and left much of the truth open to conjecture even down to the present day. The area in which the deplorable event occurred was populated by aboriginal bands of Eskimos. These people lived in seclusion that may be described as a "stone age" existence, on what the country afforded of the things necessary to life.

Wood was non-existent—or limited to a very occasional piece of drift cast up by the sea. At that period they had no free access to metallic substances or manufactured goods of any kind. They were obliged to use stone and the bones and pelts of animals in fashioning their implements of the chase and domestic utensils. Their life was essentially of a nomadic nature; forever on the move in the pursuit of food, from the sea as well as from the land. The idea of a permanent domicile was foreign to them. Tents of animal skins were used for shelter during the summer season, and that ingenious structure of their own invention, the snow hut, during the greater portion of the year. In the intrinsic economy of their simple life the keenest deficiency was soft wood and workable metals of any kind.

It is not surprising, or even blameworthy, that when these primitive people discovered the end to which a large party of white men had come to on their shores, they lost no time in improving their condition by eagerly seizing on those goods of inestimable value which they found strewed along the route of the retreat. The fate of official journals and private papers may be well imagined, as their nature or utility not being understood, they were destroyed or discarded as worthless. During the ten years interval until the arrival of McClintock the route had been thoroughly examined and pillaged by successive bands attracted to the spot; literally nothing was left but the scattered bones of the dead explorers. One stretch of coast was, however, miraculously preserved from their attention; that extending from Cape Crozier to Victory Point, where we will have observed Crozier and Fitzjames placed their record on abandoning the ships.

Early in May, 1859, we find McClintock well advanced on his main sledge journey. He was accompanied down the west coast of Boothia Peninsula by Lieutenant Hobson and a secondary party. McClintock and his party planned to proceed south to the vicinity of the Great Fish River and thence westward through Simpson Strait to the western coast of King William Island. Lieutenant Hobson was entrusted with the examination of the north and west coast of King William Island, and failing any trace of the missing expedition in this vicinity to cross Victoria Strait and examine the east coast of Victoria Land. The two parties therefore separated in the vicinity of Cape Adelaide, not to meet again until seven weeks later in their ship at Bellot Strait.

Visiting the native snow villages en route to the eastward of King William Island, McClintock gained early tidings of the lost expedition. A large collection of relics were obtained in barter with the natives and every helpful scrap of information secured. All the snow huts were found well supplied with plunder of all kinds, from one of the vessels as well as from the route of the march. Scarcely a scrap of wood was observed which had not come from the missing expedition.

As these were the only natives encountered during McClintock's investigation it is well to record briefly what they had to relate concerning the fate of the vessels and the retreating explorers. We may judge that the accounts obtained then—being had from Eskimos contemporaneous with the tragedy—were more exact

and reliable than those garnered several years later by the next investigator on the spot. Quoting verbatim from his journal we learn the following accounts obtained from different Eskimos:

"I bought a spear 6½ feet long from a man who told Petersen (the Danish interpreter) distinctly that a ship having three masts had been crushed by the ice out in the sea to the west of King William's Island, but that all the people landed safely; he was not one of those who were eye witnesses of it; the ship sunk so nothing was obtained by the natives from her. . . . ."

"One old man, Oo-na-lee, made a rough sketch of the coastline with his spear upon the snow, and said it was eight journeys to where the ship sank, pointing in the direction of Cape Felix. I can make nothing out of his rude chart."

"After much anxious enquiry we learned that two ships had been seen by the natives of King William's Island; one of these was seen to sink in deep water, and nothing was obtained from her, a circumstance at which they expressed much regret; but the other was forced on shore by the ice, where they suppose she still remains, but is much broken. From this ship they have obtained most of their wood, etc.; and Oot-loo-lik is the name of the place where she grounded . . . . The latter also told us that the body of a man was found on board the ship; that he must have been a very large man, and had long teeth; this is all he recollected having been told, for he was quite a child at the time. . . "

"They told us it was five days journey to the wreck, one day up the Inlet still in sight (Peel Inlet) and four days overland; this would carry them to the western coast of King William's Land; they added that but little now remained of the wreck which was accessible, their countrymen having carried almost everything away. . . . There had been many books they said, but all have long ago been destroyed by the weather; the ship was forced on shore in the fall of the year by the ice. . . . "

"She said many of the white men dropped by the way as they went to the Great River; that some were buried and some were not; they did not themselves witness this; but discovered their bodies during the following winter. . . . I purchased from them six pieces of silver plate, bearing the crests or initials of Franklin, Crozier, Fairholme, and McDonald; they also sold us bows and arrows of English woods, uniform and other buttons, and offered us a heavy sledge made of two short stout pieces of curved wood, which no mere boat could have furnished them with, but this of course we could not take away; the silver spoons and forks were readily sold for four needles each." [11]

These glimpses afford some idea of the earliest accounts obtained from the Eskimos indigenous to the locality of the tragedy. We also learn that McClintock —as a seaman—was satisfied no mere lifeboat could afford two stout pieces of timber which he observed.

The party then pursued its way to Montreal Island, travelling over the smooth ice to the leeward of King William Island. Although the season was approaching the middle of May it was greatly handicapped by strong winds, snowfalls, and thick visibility, with temperatures falling well below zero. On the 16th of the month the island was reached and the vicinity thoroughly investigated. Great was the disappointment of the explorers when their search was rewarded with only a few trifling relics as a climax to the certain traces they fully expected.

The removal of every trace except human remains can readily be accounted for when we consider the activities of the Eskimos. The remains which Dr. Rae learned were to be seen here were most likely washed into the sea early, as members of McClintock's party were now able to judge from their observations. This island was the most southerly point reached by any members of the crews, for there is no evidence whatever to indicate that any actually reached the mouth of Back River (the Great Fish River of the Eskimos).

While we leave McClintock to continue his journey west to Simpson Strait without finding any further traces on the way, we must record the circumstances which rendered his search so fruitless thus far. He was then passing through the area where the last survivors of the retreat finally perished; later discoveries were to establish it, from the traces found, as the locale of highest mortality.

He was unfortunate in not encountering any Eskimos in the vicinity of Montreal Island or Simpson Strait. Had he not fully relied upon doing so he would without doubt have engaged guides at the native villages in the vicinity of Matty Island to accompany the party on its travels to the westward of King William Island. The land being still clothed in its winter garb and any real discovery being only in the nature of an accident, it is only through their knowledge and assistance that he could have hoped to meet with full success in the rapid march to which his investigation was necessarily limited. Thus we find him passing within a mile or so of such important locations as the Todd Islands, Starvation Cove, and Douglas Bay.

We may observe that the season was then approaching the latter part of May and still the land and sea had the same winter aspect. Everything was still in a frozen state, and the effect of the sun's heat in altering this condition was greatly retarded by the low temperatures prevailing at night. Under such similar conditions Franklin's officers would have made an effort—as we believe they would when they could foresee the end—to secure their logs and records in some safe spot where afterwards they would be available to their countrymen. The more we dwell on this the more are we convinced of the futility of such an effort owing to the frozen nature of the terrain. The greater the precautions taken to conceal them beneath the surface the more readily would their whereabouts be discovered by the prying eyes of the Eskimos. With a skill akin to the woodcraft of the Indian their eyes are trained to read imperceptible signs. Thus we can visualize the fate of those important documents, for their recovery has exercised the thoughts and exertions of every active investigator since.

To return to McClintock and his party on the King William Island coast, approaching the western entrance to Simpson Strait, he tells us that "although the depth of snow which covered the beach deprived us of almost every hope, yet we kept a sharp look-out for traces, nor were we unsuccessful". [11] On a wind swept ridge the party discovered its first mortal trace of the retreat, a bleached human skeleton partly exposed from beneath the snow; from the tattered uniform of which they were enabled to decide the rank of the victim. The old Eskimo woman spoke a melancholy truth when she said "the white men dropped by the way as they went to the Great River".

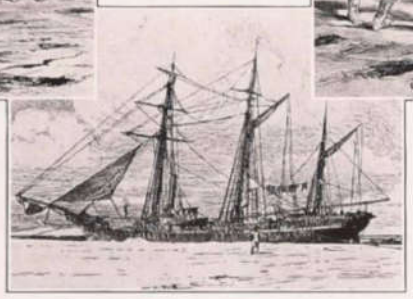
Hastening from this depressing scene the party soon came up to Cape Herschel, at which point Simpson had built a high stone cairn in 1839 to mark the

Above: Lieutenant William Robert Hobson, R N. Second in command of the "Fox" expedition, and discoverer of the Victory Point record. National Portrait Gallery photo.

Right: Lady Jane Franklin, the heroic widow of the great navigator. By Amelia Munier-Romilly. National Portrait Gallery photo.

Above: Captain Francis Leopold McClintock, R.N. The discoverer of the fate of the Franklin expedition. He was afterwards knighted and attained the rank of a full Admiral. National Portrait Gallery photo.

McClintock's first meeting with the Netsilingmiut at Cape Victoria, Boothia Peninsula, from a sketch by one of his officers. Published in the Illustrated London News, October 8th 1859.



The "Fox" used by McClintock in his expedition.

An artist's conception of Hobson's party opening the cairn at Victory Point that contained the Crozier and Fitzjames record. Published in the Illustrated London News, October 8th 1859. In reality the cairn was a small heap of loose rocks and the tin cylinder containing the record was found exposed to view.

vicinity of one of his major discoveries. It was with strong and reasonable hope that it would contain some written word of his lost countrymen that McClintock ascended the slope to examine it. He found it partially destroyed, and from his observations was fully convinced that he had been forestalled by the Eskimos. "I cannot divest myself of the belief (he tells us) that some record was left here by the retreating crews, and perhaps some most valuable documents which their slow progress and fast failing strength would have assured them could not be carried much further. If any such were left they have been long removed by the Esquimaux".

While we have followed McClintock thus far and realized the inconsummate success of his zealous endeavour, his second in command, Lieutenant W. R. Hobson, has also been busy on the north and west coast. A short distance west from Cape Herschel a small cairn was encountered containing a note from him in which he acquainted his Commander with the results of his journey up to that point, and intimated the finding of that record which Crozier and Fitzjames prepared and placed at Victory Point after the abandonment of the vessels.

This was the one momentous reward of the expedition, for no trace was found of the stranded and plundered ship on the west coast of the island. McClintock then continued his journey north, in the wake of his lieutenant, and en route to his ship at Bellot Strait. He paused long enough to examine thoroughly a large lifeboat mounted on a heavy sledge which Hobson had discovered north of Cape Crozier; a sad relic of the fatal retreat. Within it were two dissevered human skeletons and a truly amazing variety of

articles of equipment and clothing, as well as an accumulation of very slightly useful articles which amounted to mere dead weight. With the exception of some small books of a devotional nature no written or printed matter whatever was to be found. This craft he believed to belong to the *Erebus*, and he was astonished to find that it was headed towards the northeast, directly for the next point of land ahead; evidently bound for the position of the abandoned ships sixty-five miles distant, not away from them.

This circumstance leaves many possibilities open to conjecture. As McClintock's own solution arrived at on the spot is sound and tenable we can very favourably consider it. He was of the opinion that the crews had overestimated the distance they could achieve in a given time, and were under-provisioned to meet the slow rate of progress being made. No game having been procured as anticipated, Crozier could foresee the imminent exhaustion of the supplies they had brought with them from the vessels, and had despatched a party back for such groceries as still remained on board. He then concludes his observations in the following manner: "The same reasons which may be assigned for the return of this detachment from the main body, will also serve to account for their not having come back to their boat. In both instances they appear to have greatly overrated their strength, and the distance they could travel in a given time".

"Taking this view of the case, we can understand why their provisions would not last them for anything like the distance they required to travel; and why they would be obliged to send back to the ships for more, first taking from the detached party all provisions they could possibly spare. Whether all or any of the remainder of this detached party ever reached their ships is uncertain; all we know is, that they did not revisit the boat, and which accounts for the absence of more skeletons in its neighbourhood, and the Esquimaux report that there was no one alive in the ship when she drifted on shore, and that but one human body was found by them on board of her."[11]

It is evident that they did not all perish on the way back, for later investigators were to find ample corroboration for the initial report from Eskimo sources that at least one body was found on board the stranded ship. That the returning party was in serious straits for food at the time it abandoned the lifeboat, with two of its companions who were probably unable to travel further, could be surmised by McClintock's party in the absence of any trace of food in or around the craft, except a quantity of chocolate.

Before we pass from a contemplation of McClintock's discoveries we take the liberty of again quoting from his Journal a significant conclusion: "but here it is as well to state his opinion (Hobson's) as well as my own, that no part of the coast between Cape Felix and Cape Crozier has been visited by the Esquimaux since the fatal march of the lost crews in April 1848".[11] An almost incredible but true circumstance, as the lifeboat was found intact, and the record at Victory Point, as well as a huge quantity of clothing and miscellaneous articles, were preserved for discovery by Lieutenant Hobson.

Had McClintock been able to navigate his ship to King William Island and winter it in that vicinity he would have enjoyed the tremendous advantage of conducting his investigation during the summer period when the snow had melted from the land exposing the beaches and low foreshores. As circumstances ruled he accomplished as much as could be expected under the heavy handicap of the accumulated snows of winter. Another cause for regret lies in the fact that he failed to make contact with the Eskimos inhabiting the Adelaide Peninsula area. This group of people comprised really the only Eskimos who had any actual experience of members of the retreating crews when alive. It was they who discovered the fate of the white men along the shores of King William Island and on the continent, and were the source of the details of the tragedy, details which spread to neighbouring groups. From them it would have been possible then to obtain fuller and more accurate accounts than those obtained several years later from their descendants. McClintock was also at a disadvantage due to the fact that his interpreter imperfectly understood the dialect of the Eskimos with whom he did come in contact. Relating the intelligence of the stranded ship which was forced on shore by the ice five days journey away, they mentioned the place name "Oot-loo-lik". Even to-day this name is in use, and applies to the area of the mainland surrounding Sherman Inlet. The interpreter failed to grasp this significant fact with the result that McClintock understood the wreck to be on the west coast of King William Island, and sought for it there.

Ten years following McClintock's effort the next investigator came on the scene. Supported financially by Henry Grinnell of New York City, Charles Francis Hall, an American citizen, spent several years in the Arctic in an effort to solve more fully the fate of the Franklin expedition. His investigations were carried on from a base at Repulse Bay, and his resources maintained by the American whaling vessels which frequently wintered there. Repulse Bay was far removed from the scene of the disaster, and the Eskimos of the neighbourhood—among whom he pursued his enquiries— had no knowledge whatever of the Franklin expedition except such details as filtered through to them from their countrymen to the westward. From them he purported to have obtained numerous accounts, many of them of an amazing and startling nature.

In the Spring of the year 1869 Hall succeeded in making a hurried sledge journey to King William Island. He had then spent nearly five years in Hudson Bay engaged on his investigation, and it is unfortunate that his activities were limited to some four days duration in the vicinity of King William Island. For our present purpose we will limit ourselves solely to the information he obtained from the King William Island Eskimos and the discoveries he himself made in the neighbourhood.

The accounts he reported to have obtained from the Hudson Bay Eskimos—as published in his diaries—must be approached with the greatest caution, for many of them would seem to be purely imaginative and without any actual basis whatever. Hall's credulity in itself is surprising and not easily understood. The absurdity of the tracks—several years old—of "white men", which were the cause of his expedition to Fury and Hecla Strait, and the finding of cairns in the same vicinity—undoubtedly of Eskimo origin—which he attributed to "white men" who were certainly mythical. His strong belief in the fantastic and incredulous report of the survival of Crozier and other members of the expedition, and their sojourn among the King William Island Eskimos. What must have been the bewildering effect on the first King William Island Eskimos he encountered, as he rushed into their

igloo exclaiming, "Where is 'Aglooka'?" (Crozier)? Such an eccentric expectation and demand is no less amazing to us to-day, for Crozier was undoubtedly dead twenty-one years. Surely many of the incongruous accounts Hall attributed to the Eskimos of Hudson Bay were not the sober narrations for which the race is noteworthy, but rather the manifestations of a shaman's *seance*.

Hall crossed the base of Boothia Peninsula and nearing King William Island on the 10th of May came across a small village of snow houses on the sea ice. The inhabitants of this village were the same group of people with whom McClintock had contact ten years previously while on his journey south to the Great Fish River. On every hand he found wood and numerous relics from the lost expedition, several of which he purchased. On observing the top portion of a writing desk and other objects of a like nature he concluded that a large portion of the wood and other relics in their possession came from one of the ships.

The substance of the accounts obtained by Hall at this time agreed substantially with those related to Dr. Rae by the Pelly Bay natives. The only actual contact the Eskimos had with members of the retreating crews when alive was when four families met a party of some thirty white men in the vicinity of Cape Herschel, at a time of the year when the spring was far advanced. They were dragging with them a boat mounted on a heavy sledge, and all were looking wasted and unwell. They were impressed by the appearance of one in particular—a tall man—whom they took to be in authority, and whom Hall believed to be Crozier. Intercourse with the white men, whose language they could not understand, was limited to the barter of a small seal, for which they received knives in return.

The account the natives now gave Hall respecting the ship which was discovered in the vicinity of "Ootloo-lik", differed materially from that obtained by McClintock. It is best understood in his own words, which we will quote verbatim from his diary:

"It was very near O'Reilly Island, (he writes) a little eastward of the north end of said island, between it and Wilmot and Crampton Bay. A native of the island first saw the ship when sealing; it was far off seaward, beset in the ice. He concluded to make his way to it, though at first he felt afraid; got aboard but saw no one, although from every appearance somebody had been living there. At last he ventured to steal a knife, and made off as fast as he could to his home; but on showing the *Innuits* what he had stolen the men of the place all started off for the ship. To get into the igloo (cabin) they knocked a hole through because it was locked. They found there a dead man, whose body was very large and heavy, his teeth very long. . . . . He was left where they found him. One place in the ship where a great many things were found was very dark; they had to find things there by feeling around. Guns were there and a great many very good buckets and boxes. . . . . The sails, rigging and boats, everything about the ship, was in complete order. . . . ."

"The ship had four boats hanging at the sides and another was above the quarter-deck. The ice about the ship was one winter's make; all a smooth floe."

"From time to time the *Neitchilles* went to get out of her whatever they could; they made their plunder into piles on board, intending to sledge it to their igloos some time after; but on going again they found her sunk, except the top of the masts. They said they had made a hole in her bottom by getting out one of her timbers or planks. The ship was afterwards much broken up by the ice, and the masts, timbers, boxes, casks, etc. drifted on shore."

"Another native at this interview told nearly the same story of the ship and of the man found on board, adding that he was found dead on the floor, his clothes all on; that the ship was covered all over with sails or tent stuff. The cabin was down below and not on deck. The time was about the middle of May or first of June."[12]

The natives also made known to Hall the locations in which remains of the white men had been discovered on their shores; and said that many of the bones still remained to be seen. The greatest concentration of remains he judged to have been in Terror Bay, on the west coast of King William Island, and in the vicinity of Starvation Cove, on the mainland. Securing the services of a local Eskimo as guide, he decided to investigate the spot indicated nearest to where he then was. Accordingly he started out for the Todd Islets, situated off the south coast of King William Island, and reached them in less than a day's travel from the native village. The Eskimos said that they had observed five skeletons on these islets, and although he searched diligently, he succeeded only in locating a portion of one of them. Like McClintock, his efforts were handicapped by the deep layers of hard packed snow which covered the terrain.

Crossing to King William Island in the immediate vicinity Hall then examined a ten mile stretch of the shore-line. Through the assistance of his guide he was successful in locating the positions of a number of skeletons. At the mouth of Peffer River one of these was found to be complete in its parts, and to have a gold crown on one of the teeth. This latter circumstance prompted him to take these particular remains away with him, which he did. On arrival in England they were identified through the gold crown as those of Lieutenant Le Vesconte of H.M.S. *Erebus*.

After having spent four days in the vicinity of King William Island Hall took his departure for Hudson Bay. His journey was of a hurried nature, for like Dr. Rae, it was necessary for him to reach his base at Repulse Bay before the summer thaw set in.

The next investigation to take place was in 1879, ten years after Hall's curtailed sledge journey. The United States vessel *Eothen*, with a crew of twenty-three, sailed from New York Harbour for Hudson Bay on the 19th of June 1878. After an uneventful voyage the ship put into winter quarters during the autumn at Depot Island, on the western shore of the Bay.

Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka of the 3rd United States Cavalry had charge of the expedition. Although none of the party had any previous experience in the Arctic his plan of investigation was well conceived and afterwards splendidly carried out. He realized that a thorough examination of the shore-line could only be effected during the summer period, when the snow had melted and the beaches were exposed. The results of his predecessors, McClintock and Hall, had been greatly minimized by the winter mantle of snow, and he was resolved to overcome this disadvantage by spending the summer season on King William Island.

A camp was established on Depot Island, in the vicinity of the vessel, and the winter spent in preparation for the overland journey the following spring. The exploring party consisted of Schwatka, three other Europeans, and the same Hudson Bay Eskimo

The Schwatka Franklin Search expedition. The party resting after the first meeting with the Great Fish River Eskimos. From a sketch by H. W. Klutschak, artist of the expedition.

Above, right: Charles Francis Hall, the American explorer who came after McClintock in investigating the fate of the Franklin expedition.

Right: Dr. Knud Rasmussen, Denmark's foremost explorer and world authority on the Eskimo race.

who had previously served Hall in the capacity of interpreter.

Leaving the base in April, 1879, the party commenced the long traverse to the mouth of Back's Great Fish River; over seven months were to elapse before its return. Schwatka's achievement was a notable one, not only for the length and duration of the journey, but also for the good management displayed in the provisioning of the party. He successfully relied upon augmenting the supplies he brought with him by systematically securing on every occasion what game the country afforded. His party was small and his dogs and equipment judiciously selected.

Schwatka's journey took him north from the Great Fish River, through Simpson Strait to the western coast of King William Island, and north again as far as Cape Felix, the northernmost extremity of the Island. By the time he reached this point the summer was at its height and most of the snow had disappeared. The journey south to Simpson Strait was effected on the land; leisurely following the sinuosities of the shoreline the men and dogs packed the equipment. The party witnessed the breaking up of the sea ice in Victoria Strait, which occurrence took place that particular year on the 24th of July. By the latter part of October, when the new sea ice was strong enough for travel, the party started out on the long return journey to Depot Island in Hudson Bay. The days were then shortening rapidly and the snow as yet scarce on the land, yet the explorers apparently suffered no undue hardships, and made good progress back to their base.

The chief aim of the expedition was the recovery of the logs or records of the Franklin party. If any such were in existence Schwatka believed they were to be found on the western coast of King William Island. For this reason he planned to search it, from Cape Felix to Simpson Strait, when the snow had melted and the chances of success were therefore greater. The examination of Starvation Cove was again neglected, for he passed this point before the thaw had set in.

In evaluating the results of Schwatka's search it may be said that no outstanding revelations were to alter the conclusions formed from the prior discoveries of McClintock. No trace of a record or document of any kind was found; which disappointment was emphasized by the singular fact that a piece of wax candle had been preserved by the natives all these years, while every scrap of paper had perished. Several graves and skeletons were discovered at six difficult locations on the western coast of King William Island. In one of the graves, situated four miles south of Victory Point, the remains were identified by means of a silver medal as those of Lieutenant James Irving, third officer of H.M.S. *Terror*. They were taken away by Schwatka and subsequently interred at Edinburgh, Scotland. If we refer to the Victory Point Record we will learn that Irving was the officer who recovered it for Crozier—on the abandonment of the ships—a short distance to the northward of the point, where the late Commander Gore had deposited it a year previously. It is unlikely that Irving died at that time, to be buried so close to Victory Point as a distance of only four miles. We can well surmise that he was one of the party who later turned back to the ships from the main body—

probably in the vicinity of Terror Bay—and that his death and burial took place, not in April, but very likely early in July.

The following accounts, taken verbatim from Schwatka's diaries, will suffice to summarize the tidings he received from the natives. The Eskimos he came in contact with were for the first time members of the group most vitally concerned with the discovery of the Franklin disaster. It was members of this group —known as the Ilivilermiut—who had met the retreating white men on the western coast of King William Island. The Eskimos whom McClintock and Hall interviewed were a neighbouring group to the eastward, known as the Netsilingmiut. They no doubt came on the scene of the tragedy early but only after the Ilivilermiut had discovered it.

Interviewing an old man on the subject of the discovered ship, Schwatka records: "The next white man he saw was dead in a bunk of a big ship which was frozen in the ice near an island about five miles due west of Grant Point, on Adelaide Peninsula. They had to walk out about three miles on smooth ice to reach the ship. . . . . When his people saw the ship so long without anyone around, they used to go on board and steal pieces of wood and iron. They did not know how to get inside by the doors, and cut a hole in the side of the ship, on a level with the ice, so that when the ice broke up during the following summer the ship filled and sank. . . . . They found plenty of knives, forks, spoons, pans, cups and plates on board, and afterwards found a few such things on shore after the vessel had gone down. They also saw books on board and left them there. They only took knives, forks, spoons and pans; the other things they had no use for".[13]

Schwatka now records the story of an old woman whom he interviewed on Adelaide Peninsula. She had been one of the party who actually saw the white men when alive. She was the only eye-witness in fact ever to have such an experience written down.

"Ahlangyar pointed out (writes Schwatka) the eastern coast of Washington Bay as the spot where she, in company with her husband and two other men with their wives, had seen ten white men dragging a sledge with a boat on it many years ago. . . . The sledge was on the ice and a wide crack separated them from the white men at the interview. The women went on shore and the men awaited the white people at the crack on the ice. Five of the white men put up a tent on the shore and five remained with the boat on the ice. The *Innuits* put up a tent not far from the white men, and stayed together here five days. During this time the *Innuits* killed a number of seals on the ice and gave them to the white men. They gave her husband a chopping knife. . . . . At the end of five days they all started for Adelaide Peninsula, fearing that the ice, which was very rotten, might not let them across. They started at night, because then, the sun being low, the ice would be a little frozen. The white men followed, dragging their heavy sledge and boat, and could not cross the rotten ice so fast as the *Innuits*, who halted and waited for them at Gladman's Point. The *Innuits* could not cross to the mainland, the ice was too rotten, and they remained in King William Land all summer. They never saw the white men again, though they waited at Gladman's Point fishing in the neighbouring lakes, going back and forth between the shore and lakes nearly all summer, and then went to the eastern shore near Matty Island. Some of the white men were very thin, and their mouths were dry and hard and black. They had no fur clothing on."[13]

Very complete accounts were obtained by Schwatka from different natives concerning their discoveries at Starvation Cove and in the small unnamed inlet immediately to the southeast. From these it is apparent that some thirty or forty members of the Franklin party perished in this vicinity. A lifeboat and many articles of value were found; the boat being broken up and the material divided amongst the people. Many scattered skeletons were observed on high water mark, some covered with sea weed and others partially washed away. Books and papers were to be seen for a time, scattered around among the rocks along the shore and also back from it. Evidently the retreating party who had reached thus far were in the last extremity of exhaustion for no graves were to be seen, only the scattered remains lying where death had claimed them.

The discovery of the logs and journals of the Franklin expedition has intrigued every investigator even down to the present time. If the Eskimo accounts are believed there is no cause for speculation regarding their fate. The following clear account was obtained by Schwatka and no reason exists why we should doubt its authenticity, especially as it does not stand alone: "In answer to a question which we asked his mother (writes Schwatka) he said he saw books at the boat place (Starvation Cove) in a tin case, about two feet long and a foot square, which was fastened and they broke it open. The case was full. . . . . The boat was right side up, and the tin case in the boat. Outside the boat he saw a number of skulls. He forgot how many but said there were more than four. . . . . The bones are now covered up with sand and sea-weed as they were lying just at high water mark. Some of the books were taken home for the children to play with, and finally torn and lost, and others lay around among the rocks until carried away by the wind and lost or buried beneath the sand".

Schwatka obtained corroboration for the native account obtained by Hall regarding the presence of a large camp with many skeletons in Terror Bay. From the descriptions given he believed it to be a hospital camp. It was found by the natives on a small islet at the head of the bay. "The natives said (writes Schwatka) nothing was to be seen where previously they saw many skeletons and other indications of the white man's camp, as it was so close to the water that all traces had disappeared".[13]

With the departure of Lieutenant Schwatka and his party from King William Island, time carried on its process of effacement for twenty-four years, when the next party of Europeans came on the scene. This was in the year 1903, when a voyage was undertaken which was to prove unique in the long history of the North-west Passage. Captain Roald Amundsen with the small vessel *Gjoa* reached King William Island from the Atlantic, and sheltered for a period of two years in a small basin on the south shore which he named Gjoa Haven. Profiting from the disastrous experience of the Franklin expedition, beset in the mass of heavy ice to the north-westward of the island, and by Dr. Rae's later discovery of a channel to the eastward comparatively free from obstruction, he had little difficulty in reaching the first objective of his journey within four months of his departure from Norway. Science and invention were making rapid strides then as now, for the *Gjoa* was equipped with a means of auxiliary propulsion new to the Arctic—the

internal combustion engine, the utility of which greatly contributed to the success of the voyage.

The activities of the expedition while at King William Island were devoted to a scientific study of terrestrial magnetism, and did not include any investigations relating to the fate of the Franklin crews. The only record we have of their contact with the visible evidence of the retreat is when Lieutenant Hansen, engaged on a boat trip along the south shore of the island in July 1904, lands with his party on the low foreshore of Point C. F. Hall, just west of the Todd Islets. The attention of the party was immediately claimed by the sight of a demolished stone monument around which was found scattered a number of human bones. What the explorers were then witnessing was a desecrated grave in which Hall, thirty-five years previously, had interred the remains of two members of the ill-fated crews. Amongst the pile a large slab of limestone was discovered on which he had engraved extemporaneously a touching tribute in the following words: "Eternal Honour to the Discoverers of the North-West Passage." The Norwegian explorers feelingly restored the grave and replaced Hall's tribute on the top of the monument.'[4]

The following year the *Gjoa* sailed forth on the next stage of her memorable voyage. Nosing through the scattered ice to the westward of the Todd Islets, Amundsen dipped his country's flag in silent tribute to the lonely grave on shore.

After the departure of the *Gjoa* eighteen years elapsed before the next European visited King William Island. Knud Rasmussen—the noted Danish explorer and world authority on the Eskimo race—was engaged on a journey of ethnological research which extended right across Arctic North America. Successfully adopting Eskimo methods of life and travel, and subsisting almost entirely on the game resources of the country, his long journey was accomplished by dog team and sledge; a feat undreamed of in the days of Franklin. He spent several months in the vicinity of King William Island in the year 1923, and visited every group of Eskimos in the vicinity. He availed himself of this intercourse with the natives to learn what was then possible concerning the disastrous fate of the Franklin crews.

Compared with his predecessors Rasmussen was more eminently qualified as an investigator from Eskimo sources. Not only had he a masterly command of their dialect but he understood intimately their mental make-up, and had a sympathetic understanding of their peculiarity of narration and reaction to persistent interrogation. Unfortunately he came too late to derive the advantages which these essential qualifications would have earlier assured. Little hope existed of making any fresh discoveries, and the sum of knowledge in possession of the natives was necessarily limited to the traditional accounts which had been handed down to them verbally. These traditional accounts by Eskimos of the contemporary period are nevertheless important in that they harmonize with those obtained by Hall and Schwatka. Rasmussen's talents as a translator alone warrant quotation of two outstanding narrations, which are essentially the substance of what he learned from the people on the whole.

Before passing to these native accounts we will first quote what Rasmussen has to say concerning the Franklin ships and the truthfulness and trustworthiness of the Eskimos as narrators: "It is the general belief (he writes) that the wrecked ships of the Franklin expedition have been of great service to the Eskimos of the North-west Passage and particularly remedied their lack of wood and iron for a long time. It is a fact, however, that the Franklin ships were crushed by the ice, even if at first they were found by the Eskimos, still undamaged but abandoned by their crews. I will revert later to the traditions that still live among the Netsilingmiut about this expedition, and will at this point simply state that the Franklin ships have never provided the Eskimos with much material. On the other hand the population right from Committee Bay to Hudson Bay and Back River, from King William's Land to Kent Peninsula, have had implements of wood and iron that could definitely be traced back to the John Ross Expedition (1829-32)".

"The Arviligjuarmiut still had many recollections of their first meeting with white men, and the sober manner in which they told of these experiences, now almost a hundred years old, is good evidence of how reliable the Eskimos can be as narrators if only they have to do with people that understand them. I emphasize this here because it is not uncommon that travellers assert that an Eskimo can be made to say almost anything. This quite unwarranted accusation is effectively discounted through the following accounts of their meetings and intercourse with white travellers. . . . ."

"I must admit there is nothing particularly exciting about these experiences, but perhaps just because of that they provide good testimony of the good memories and trustworthiness of the Eskimos. These encounters with white men have been quite *en passant*, and there has not been time to learn to know the people they mention in the slightest; and yet so many, many years afterwards they preserve the traditions of their experiences with unembellished and sober reliability. If the particular reports of these expeditions are turned up the ancient verbal traditions will be found to be in the best agreement with the books."[5]

The following account of the meeting between the retreating white men and the Eskimos on the west coast of King William Island was given by an old man named Iggiararjuk. Rasmussen records it as follows in the first person:

"My father, Mangaq, was with Tetquatsaq and Quablut on a seal hunt on the west side of King William's Land when they heard shouts, and discovered three white men who stood on shore waving to them. This was in Spring; there was already open water along the land, and it was not possible to get to them before low tide. The white men were very thin, hollow-cheeked and looked ill. They were dressed in white man's clothes, had no dogs and were travelling with sledges which they drew themselves. They bought seal meat and blubber and paid with a knife. There was great joy on both sides at this bargain, and the white men cooked the meat at once with the aid of the blubber and ate it. Later on the strangers went along to my father's tent camp and stayed there the night before returning to their own little tent, which was not of animal skin but of something white like snow. At that time there were already caribou on King William's Land, but the strangers seemed to hunt only wildfowl; in particular there were many eider ducks and ptarmigan then. The earth was not yet alive and the swans had not come to the country. Father and his people would have willingly helped the white men, but could not understand them; they tried to explain themselves by signs and in fact learned to know a lot by this means. They had once been many they said; now they

KING WILLIAM ISLAND AND VICINITY

A large lake on the south coast of King William Island. The Todd Islets can be seen in the middle distance just off-shore. The mirage of the mainland can be seen on the horizon. This was the point of departure from King William Island. R.C.A.F. photo.

Hudson's Bay Company's vessel unloading freight at King William Island.

View of the south coast of King William Island. Peffer River can be seen entering the sea in the middle distance. It was at this point that Hall discovered the skeleton of Lt. Le Vesconte in 1866. R.C.A.F. photo.

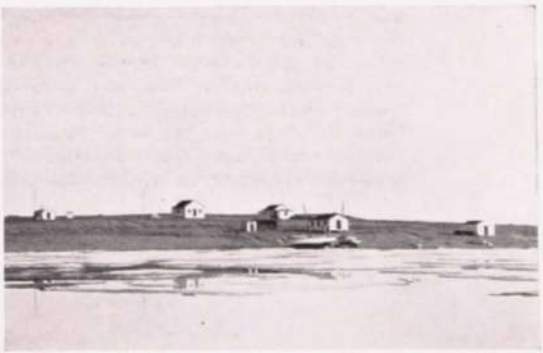
The south coast of Erebus Bay. In a central position on the near shore McClintock discovered the lifeboat which was headed back towards the ships. R.C.A.F. photo.

A view of the interior of King William Island in summer. Passing inland from the rocky coast-line the terrain gives way to tundra and a flat featureless plain.

Looking west from the western entrance to Simpson Strait. Cape Herschel can be seen in the distance. This was the vicinity in which units of the Franklin party met the Eskimos. R.C.A.F. photo.

Gjoa Haven, on the south coast of King William Island. The site of the Hudson's Bay Company's trading post and wireless station. R.C.A.F. photo.

The Hudson's Bay Company's post and private Commercial Radio Station CZ2L, at Gjoa Haven, King William Island.



were only few, and they had left their ship out in the pack ice. They pointed to the south, and it was understood that they wanted to go home overland. They were not met again, and no one knows where they went to." [15]

The following narration given by Qaqortingneq, an Ilivilermiut hunter who is still living, typifies the traditions which exist among the Eskimos to-day concerning the ship which was discovered frozen in the ice. Rasmussen records this account also in the first person: "Two brothers were once out sealing northwest of Qeqertaq (King William Island). It was in Spring, at the time when the snow melts away around the breathing holes of the seals. Far out on the ice they saw something black, a large black mass that could be no animal. They looked more closely and found that it was a great ship. They ran home at once and told their fellow-villagers of it, and next day they all went out to it. They saw nobody, the ship was deserted, and so they made up their minds to plunder it of everything they could get hold of. But none of them had ever met white men, and they had no idea what all the things they saw could be used for. One man who saw a boat hanging up over the gunwhale, shouted, 'A trough, a gigantic trough! I am going to have that!' He had never seen a boat and so he thought it was a meat trough. He cut through the lines that held the boat, and it crashed down on the ice bottom upwards and was smashed".

"They found guns in the ship too, and as they had no suspicion of what they were, they knocked the steel barrels off and hammered them out for harpoons. In fact, so ignorant were they about guns that they said a quantity of percussion caps they found were 'little thimbles', and they really thought that among the white men there lived a dwarf people who could use them."

"At first they dared not go down into the ship itself, but soon they became bolder and even ventured into the houses that were on deck. There they found many dead men lying in their bunks. At last they also risked going down into the enormous room in the middle of the ship. It was dark there. But soon they found tools and would make a hole in order to let light in. And the foolish people, not understanding white man's things, hewed a hole just on the water line so that the water poured in and the ship sank. And it went to the bottom with all the valuable things, of which they barely rescued any."

"The same year well into Spring, three men were on their way from King William's Land to Adelaide Peninsula to hunt for caribou calves. There they found a boat with the bodies of six men. In the boat were guns, knives, and some provisions, showing that they had perished of sickness."

"There are several places in our country where we still see bones of these white men. I myself have been at Qaudlunarsiorfik (Starvation Cove); up to only a few years ago we used to go over there to dig for lead and pieces of iron. And there is Kangerarfigdluk (Terror Bay), quite close to us, a little way along the coast towards the west."

"That is all I know about the 'Pelrartut' as we call the white men who once visited our country and who were lost without our forefathers being able to help them." [15]

In the late autumn Rasmussen succeeded in making a hurried journey to Starvation Cove. This was the first occasion on which this important location had been investigated. Undoubtedly it was one of the high mortality points in the retreat, but few traces remained to be seen after the elapse of seventy-five years. "There, exactly where the Eskimos had indicated (writes Rasmussen), we found a number of human bones that were undoubtedly the mortal remains of members of the Franklin expedition; some pieces of cloth at the same place showed that they were of white men. Now, almost eighty years after, wild beasts had scattered the white, sun-bleached bones out over the peninsula and thus removed the sinister traces from the spot where the last struggle had once been fought".

"We had been the first friends that had ever visited the place. Now we gathered their bones together, built a cairn over them and hoisted two flags at half mast, the English and the Danish. Thus without very many words we did them the last honours." [15]

Rasmussen's sojourn at King William Island coincided with a notable event in that locality which we will now pass on to. For many years prior to 1923 civilization had been advancing slowly northward and along the Arctic coast, unobtrusively establishing its outposts in spots hitherto considered inaccessible. Aroused by the wild shouts of the natives one day late in the autumn, the explorer was astonished to behold the white sails of a vessel entering Simpson Strait from the westward. The Hudson's Bay Company's schooner *El Sueno* was bound on a commercial mission which resulted in the establishment of a trading station on the south shore of the island. Since that year King William Island has been occupied by Europeans, and the Company's vessels successfully voyage each summer to maintain the tiny settlement. The scene of the last enactment of the Franklin expedition is no longer remote or isolated within the depths of the Arctic ice. Nowadays it is possible to make the journey from the end of steel in Northern Alberta, comfortably, even with a fair degree of luxury, in a leisurely six weeks during the navigational season. The use of aircraft which operate on scheduled flights to Coronation Gulf would reduce this time still further.

Great progressive changes have taken place at King William Island since the time Franklin's men struggled and expired so utterly remote from the nearest outpost of the civilized race. London's "Big Ben" from the heart of the Empire booms in to-day in those very same shores. Patrols of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police pass along them periodically, quietly engaged in the execution of manifold routine duties. A commercial short wave radio station affords participation in that vast network of rapid communications which encircle the globe. Powerful diesel engines have supplanted the sail and limited steam of ninety years ago. Climatic conditions, travel and food problems, are met to-day with new methods and a new technique which has robbed the Arctic of its inimical reputation, and reduced life and travel within its borders almost to the level of the commonplace.

During these latter years the quest for traces of the retreat has continued; officials of the Company and representatives of the Dominion Government have at different times covered the entire route of the march from Cape Felix to Montreal Island. Yet no new palpable fact or even fragment of a document has been brought to light. Nothing but here and there at a few points the bleached and fast disappearing bones of the unfortunate seamen reward the searcher. Time and

the earlier activities of the Eskimos have removed all tangible traces except these mournful remnants.

Under the auspices of the Hudson's Bay Company the writer was privileged to head a small party which carried out a curtailed search on the south coast of King William Island during the year 1931. In recording briefly a description of the journey and its results it may be pointed out that it was not undertaken with any sanguine expectation of discovering records, nor yet to collect any of the negligible relics which the Eskimos have left for our discovery. Its object was merely to locate and inter such mortal remains as the Eskimos led us to believe were still to be seen at different points; for it was a sad and reproachful thought that the bones of brave and unfortunate men were still scattered on shores where the flag had been flying for almost a decade.

In starting out from the settlement at Gjoa Haven late in June the season was most suitable for a search of the coast-line. The snow had almost entirely disappeared from the land, and the sea ice was covered with innumerable pools of fresh water caused by the melted snow on its surface. The days were mild and pleasant, marred only by occasional depressing fogs which destroyed visibility and lowered the temperature. The whole scene had undergone complete transformation in a surprisingly short space of time. Struggling vegetation and numerous Arctic wild flowers made themselves manifest in the more sheltered and favourable spots. The wild ducks, recently arrived from the south, animated the ice free ponds and lake borders with their presence and noise, imparting life to the sombre landscape. The sun circled the sky continuously, affording uninterrupted daylight and congenial warmth.

The Todd Islands are comprised of a group of four small islets lying close inshore. These islets—the first objective in our search—were the point of departure for the *Erebus* and *Terror* survivors from the King William Island coast to the mainland of the continent fifteen miles distant. It is quite evident they were topographically confused in pursuing their journey to Back River, for instead of crossing to the mainland at the narrowest part of Simpson Strait—where the width is only around two miles—they continued east adhering to the shore of the island. On reaching the Todd Islets they found the coast extending away to the north-east, while the mainland had fallen off to the south until only the tip of Richardson Point was visible from sea level. When they eventually reached Starvation Cove they had actually travelled twice the distance from Simpson Strait.

The Eskimos informed Hall in 1869 that they had observed five skeletons of white men on the Todd Islets; a portion of one of these he discovered and presumably buried in some manner. We could find no trace of a grave, but were fortunate in locating the partial remains of at least four skeletons. Two of these were found embedded in the soft sand of a low spit running out from the most southerly islet in the group. One was almost intact and lying in an extended natural position, evidently that of a slight young man. The teeth of both jaws were complete and remarkable in their flawless perfection. These skeletons had been well preserved in the moist sand and patches of the blue naval broadcloth held together and were taken away by us. Digging in the vicinity of the other remains—which were very incomplete—the vivid colour only of the broadcloth was discernible, the fabric having entirely disintegrated. The low spit referred to must be frequently washed by high tides during the summer season, and it is possible further remains were earlier buried beneath the sand.

Continuing to the westward some time was spent in an endeavour to locate the several remains which Hall had mentioned in his diary as being in the neighbourhood, especially the grave which Hansen found in 1904 bearing his inscribed tribute on a flat slab of limestone. Although we searched closely we met with no success, the cairns or marks having been most likely demolished long ago by the Eskimos. In fact one of them told us that the inscribed slab of stone was broken when he last saw it some years previously. The coast is composed of a mass of broken limestone and gravel mounds in which numerous old Eskimo stone structures—mostly meat caches—occur regularly. This condition rendered it impossible to discern where a cairn or monument had once stood.

Peffer River was found to be a turbulent stream flowing through a grassy valley now fresh and green. Its waters, swollen with the melting snow from the interior, tumbled down to the sea ice and dispersed with a roaring noise through a large tidal crack. On the left bank, close to the sea ice, Hall had found the remains of Lieutenant le Vesconte of the *Erebus*. The Eskimos informed us that further remains were still to be seen at this point, and after a prolonged search we discovered some traces of a human skeleton on the low foreshore. These consisted principally of one femoral bone and a number of vertebra. Evidently the greater portion of the skeleton had been washed into the sea.

Douglas Bay, which is one of the large indentations of the south coast, was our next point of interest. The bay was flooded with large sheets of water drained from the land, and numerous tidal cracks were opening up. Many seals had used these to gain access to the surface of the ice, and lay basking alongside in the sunshine. The bay is very shoal, and as one advances into it several tiny islets occur. On one of these just off the east shore, exactly where the Eskimos had indicated, we found the next traces. We were scarcely prepared however for the amount of human remains which we could see even as we waded ashore. Seven skulls and a fair proportion of the co-essential anatomy resulted from our examination of the tiny islet. These were scattered around widely on the bare limestone shingle and bleached to an intense whiteness. On the elevation two moss grown tent rings told the tale of transient natives who long ago had camped to ransack the site of so much mortality. Nothing further of importance was to be found except wood shavings and some small fragments of well weathered oak and pine. Evidently the Eskimos had converted the much prized wood to their various uses on the spot. A grave was prepared for the remains on the crown of the islet, and a large cairn erected as a monument to mark the spot. From the position in which some of the remains lay, close to the high water mark, we could not help speculating that the sea had exacted its claims here also.

Tulloch Point, the west arm of Douglas Bay, was next visited. It is a prominent headland strewn with large boulders on the lower elevations. The ancient shelving beaches which feature the entire coast are here most pronounced, while a short distance inland patches of clay intersperse the monotonous and barren limestone ridges, offering foothold for a comparatively profuse vegetation. We had no difficulty in locating a large partially demolished stone structure close to the

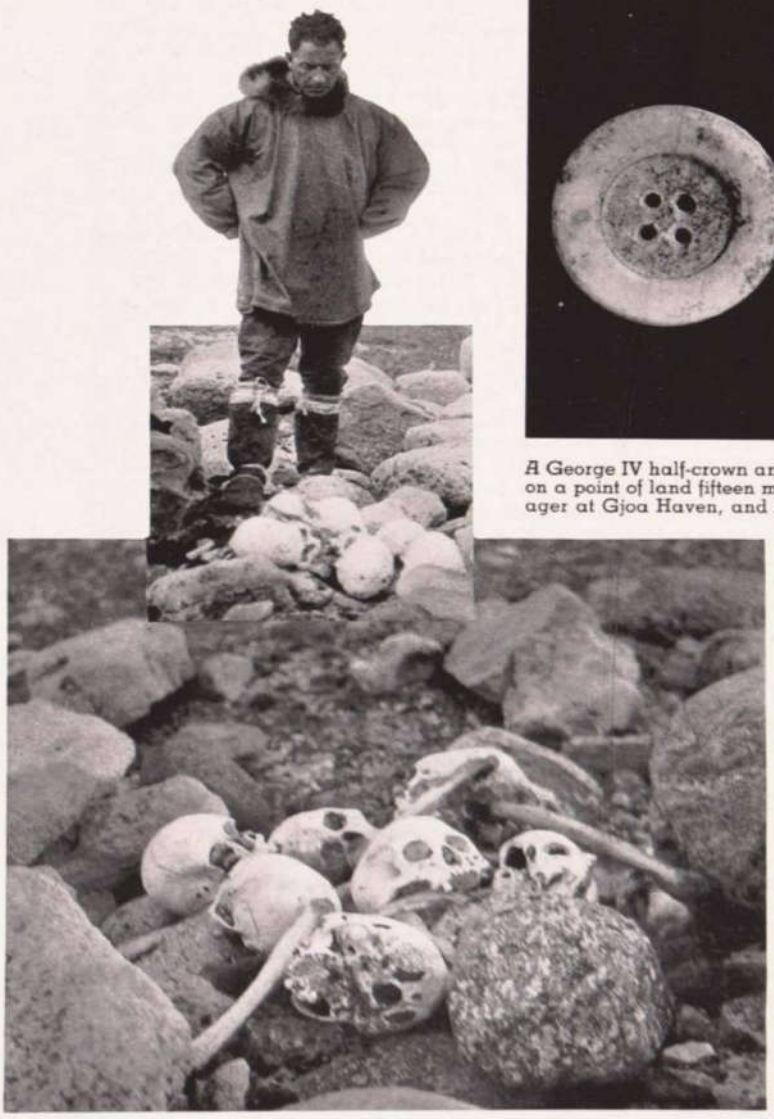
FRANKLIN RELICS

Grave of a member of the Franklin expedition in Terror Bay. Monument rebuilt by Patsy Klengenberg in 1931. Photo P. Klengenberg.

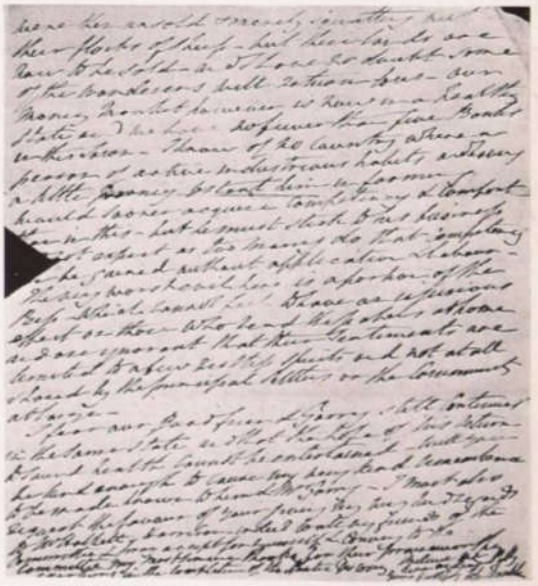
While on patrol at King William Island Sergt. Makinson of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police inspects a grave containing remains of members of the Franklin expedition.

The late Mrs. Klengenberg photographed beside a mass of crumpled metal which she discovered in Terror Bay, 1931. A relic of the Franklin expedition; obviously the remains of a water tank from one of the life boats. Photo P. Klengenberg.

A George IV half-crown and an old-time ivory sailor button discovered in August 1936 on a point of land fifteen miles west of Starvation Cove by L. A. Learmonth, post manager at Gjoa Haven, and his assistant D. G. Sturrock.



The author with the collected remains of seven members of the Franklin expedition discovered by the Hudson's Bay Company search party on an islet in Douglas Bay, July 1931.



Last page of a letter from Sir John Franklin to the Governor of the Company, dated "Govt. House VD Land," October 7th, 1838. The letter congratulates Peter Warren Dease and Thomas Simpson on their recent successes in Arctic exploration.

beach which the natives had informed us contained the bones of a white man. Schwatka records in his diary the Eskimo account he received of this grave in 1879, but apparently he did not visit the spot to investigate; apart from the natives we had been the first to do so. The remains had apparently been placed on the ground in the centre of the structure, which was composed of large boulders. But we now found a portion of the skeleton including the skull scattered alongside the ruin. Evidently the Eskimos had excavated the pile and removed the remains in the course of their investigation. It seemed reasonable to conclude that these were the remains of a member of the Franklin party, and that his surviving companions had carried out the rough burial. The Eskimos' insistence on the identity of the grave both in 1879 and fifty-two years later, and also the fact that they themselves do not customarily bury on a low shore, but always on the nearest available heights, can be regarded in a conclusive light.

We continued our search as far as Simpson's cairn on Cape Herschel, at the western entrance to Simpson Strait, without finding any further traces on the way. The days were advancing rapidly into July and becoming steadily warmer as we commenced the return journey to Gjoa Haven. The shore water was increasing rapidly and the tidal fissures widening. By the end of the month or early in August the sea ice would disintegrate and break up, to be slowly dispersed by the wind and currents: the short navigational period would then be at hand and the short summer season on the wane.[16]

The latest discovery of further remains of members of the Franklin crews took place as recently as during the month of September, 1936. Chief Trader L. A. Learmonth, accompanied by D. G. Sturrock, both of the Hudson's Bay Company, carried out a reconnaissance by motor boat from Gjoa Haven along the northeast coast of Adelaide Peninsula. Assisted by the Eskimos they succeeded in locating several scattered skulls and other remains in the vicinity of a low point a short distance to the westward of Starvation Cove. This point is unnamed on existing charts but is known to the Eskimos as Tikeraniyou (Crooked Finger).

A peculiarity of this fresh discovery is the fact that the remains here also were found on or just above the high water mark. This consideration, which was also evident at Starvation Cove, strongly suggests that the retreating party which perished on the Adelaide Peninsula coast reached there before the summer had set in or the snow had melted from the beaches. In other words they were far in advance of the parties whom the Eskimos met near Cape Herschel about the middle of July. The importance of the northeast coast of Adelaide Peninsula as the major scene of the final passing of the Franklin Expedition is strengthened by this new disclosure.

The only tangible relics which resulted from a careful search of the vicinity of the various remains were a silver George IV half crown, bearing the date 1820, and a sailor's ivory button. These small objects had apparently escaped the thoroughness of the Eskimos; but it is note-worthy that, as elsewhere, every scrap of wood and other durable material had vanished.

Before passing from a summary of the accounts obtained from Eskimo sources some cognizance must be accorded a recent report attributed to them, which, if we could afford it credence, would result in a completely new picture of the events incident to the tragic happening.[17]

This report, which has received wide circulation, had its inception in the year 1926. It indicates that the wreck of one of the Franklin ships lies submerged off a small islet to the northeast of Matty Island. Not only this, but a cache of wooden cases was found on the islet by two native hunters, approximately forty years after the abandonment of the *Erebus* and *Terror* in 1848. The cases were symmetrically piled in a cache some twenty feet long, five feet wide, and more than five feet high; they were supposed to have contained flour and pemmican, packed in sealed tin containers.

No doubt exists regarding the southerly trend of the current in Victoria Strait. Therefore one of the ships could not possibly drift to a position in the vicinity of Matty Island unless it almost circumnavigated King William Island. It is unnecessary to comment upon the feasibility of such a feat, and the obstructions which foul the narrow confines of Simpson Strait. The theory has been advanced that both ships were possibly remanned and navigated to the positions indicated by the Eskimos by a remnant of the crews who abandoned the march and returned to them. It is further suggested that the cache of cases on the islet may be accounted for as having been placed there by the crew of the wrecked ship, which is supposed to lie submerged in the vicinity.

No trace whatever of the sojourn or death of Europeans in the surrounding area has ever been discovered. What, we may ask, happened to the seamen; did they go down with their ship after establishing so methodically a cache of provisions on the neighbouring islet? What caused the ship to sink so suddenly that they did not succeed in getting ashore to the nearby land? How could this conspicuous cache, built upon a small islet which is described as a "low flat terrain", possibly escape the eyes of the Eskimos for forty years? Set in the midst of one of their main sealing areas, and on the route of their migrations up and down the west coast of Boothia Peninsula, it is incredible they could have missed it while elsewhere every fragment of wood and scrap of metal had been picked up years before. In the intensified light of spring such a striking and alien object would stand out like a city building and be visible on the flat white plain for several miles.

How did Rasmussen, who visited and lived for a time with all the groups of Eskimos in the King William Island area, miss this significant story? With his skilful command of the dialect and inherent insight of Eskimo character, we must conclude that it did not exist in the year 1923, or most certainly he would have placed it on record if it had any relation to the Franklin expedition. We must particularly remember what he had to say concerning the reliability and truthfulness of the Eskimos as narrators "if only they have to do with people who understand them".

Prudent investigation will reveal that the report has no foundation in reality as far as it concerns the Franklin expedition, and the theory built upon it entirely illogical and unwarrantable. No Eskimos have ever actually seen the wreck, submerged or otherwise. The report, which is very ambiguous concerning it, only implies that they have. If it exists at all it is in fancy only, probably through association with their finding in the locality a quantity of material which certainly did come from a ship.

In the course of his famous voyage of the Northwest Passage, Roald Amundsen had the misfortune to ground his vessel, the *Gjoa*, off the northeast end of Matty Island in the fall of the year 1903. In his pub-

lished works he describes dramatically the exciting and perilous incident and the expeditious measures which averted disaster. In order to reduce the draught of the vessel it was necessary to jettison the entire deck cargo, which consisted principally of lumber intended for the erection of scientific stations, and a large quantity of pemmican in cases.[14] It is inevitable that a portion of this sacrificed deck cargo washed up on the shores of the small islands in the vicinity, to be afterwards discovered and salvaged by the natives. This is really what did take place; a fact which can be readily ascertained from the Netsilik group, as the circumstances are still well known and certain details are available. For instance, some of the wood, evidently factory sawn, was found embedded in the sand on the shore of one of the islets. It was soft wood, easily workable, and suitable for constructing sledges and kayak frames, and therefore much prized.

Through faulty interpretation and misunderstanding, is it possible that the finding of this jetsam is the basis of a sunken ship which could be none other than one of Franklin's were it real instead of mythical? Not a single indigenous trace of members of the Franklin crews was ever found in the vicinity of Matty Island or on the east coast of King William Island by either Europeans or natives. The wood and other articles which McClintock found in possession of the Eskimos in this area in the year 1859, on their own unanimous statement came from the vicinity of Montreal Island and the wrecked ship they reported five days journey overland to the westward.

. . . . . .

We have now completed an outline of the researches which have established all that is known concerning the fate of the Franklin expedition. It remains only to attempt briefly a reconstruction of the tragedy in the light of what has been discovered and what may be reasonably concluded.

Crozier's decision to abandon his ships was forced upon him by reason of his dwindling provisions, which were certainly insufficient to last for anything like another winter; and more especially on account of a subtle disease which was spreading among his men, and for which there was no arresting cure except a change of diet. There is every reason to believe that both he and Fitzjames were actuated with the highest sense of duty and responsibility, and faced with decision the dreadful alternative to a bold attempt to save the lives of their men, rather than permit them to perish miserably in inactivity and hopelessness. The time would seem to have been at hand for such an effort and they seized upon it resolutely.

Crozier had two routes of retreat open to him: northeastward to Prince Regent Inlet or Lancaster Sound—where he would certainly eventually have fallen in with rescue or whaling ships, or southward to Fort Reliance, the nearest outpost in the interior of Canada. If he had adopted the former he would have emulated what Ross successfully accomplished in 1832-33, with a smaller party in a sounder state of health. Little game other than seals would be procurable on this route, but he knew that there was a cache of groceries and other necessities at Fury Beach on Somerset Island, where it had been left by a former expedition. The southerly route he doubtless believed to abound in game, especially the desirable caribou, and there was the chance of receiving some assistance from the different groups of natives as he fell in with them. What he needed most urgently was fresh game of any kind in order to stem the rising tide of scurvy. Every other consideration had to be subordinated to this pressing necessity otherwise the disease was immitigable and imminent disaster a certainty. This is most likely the factor which influenced him in attempting a retreat up the Great Fish River in preference to the northeastward.

Crozier was correct in assuming that game was plentiful to the southward; that is during the late spring and summer months. At the height of the summer season the marshes and tundra a short distance inland on the continent are alive with wild life. Swans circle over the larger lakes on the look-out for nesting and feeding places. Every pond is occupied by the predominant eider duck. Brant and Canada grey geese, as well as a variety of other water fowl, are to be seen on the swampy flats. Groups of caribou, browsing on the summer herbage, dot the plains. In the lagoons, in the creek mouths, in the lakes, a fine variety of Arctic salmon and trout are universally common. The whole aspect of the interior during the summer period is very radically changed. With its verdant hue and wild flowers and the noise of birds, the rigorous nature of its climate is temporarily subdued.

What Crozier probably did not realize was the inability of his men through inexperience—apart from their ailing condition—to find and secure the game in anything like sufficient quantities. The seamen were not expert or practised hunters to whom any great degree of success was ascribable. A similar number of Eskimos could not have marched in a body for anything like the distance attempted and have subsisted upon the game they came across on the way. With their natural and acquired skill as hunters, and their knowledge of the country and where to seek the game, they would have scattered out in small bands over a large area and by devious routes have arrived eventually at their destination, fit and well.

The disastrous outcome of the retreat was indeed logical when everything is taken into consideration. The unwieldly size of the party, following unerringly the same line of retreat and thereby lessening their already slim chances of securing any worthwhile quantity of game. Leaving their ships so early as the latter part of April, before the spring had really set in or the caribou and wild fowl migrations had materialized. Unsuitably attired to meet the low temperatures which prevailed for some considerable time after leaving the ships. Hauling with them provisions for some forty days only—for this is all they could reasonably have managed, and at that a short allowance. Even if everything had gone well, forty days would only have taken them to the mouth of Back's Great Fish River, that is, about the first week in June, when they would still be some six hundred miles from their destination. They would have arrived then, with their supplies exhausted, and the river which they proposed to ascend in boats still frozen over to a depth of six or seven feet. As the river ice does not break up and move down to the sea until at the earliest the first week in July they would have been unable to continue their journey for a full month at least. What was to become of them in the meantime, and how were they to find sufficient game in such a limited area to support themselves through this transitional period even though they were fairly successful in hunting? Their lack of appreciation of the stupendous nature of the enterprise they were undertaking is also evident

ESKIMO GROUPS IN VICINITY OF KING WILLIAM ISLAND

POPULATION CHART

Netsilik Group		
Arvertormiut	10 Male	8 Female
Igtuartorfikmiut	30 Male	26 Female
Qeqertarmiut	11 Male	9 Female
Kungmiut	24 Male	19 Female
Arviligjuarmiut	34 Male	29 Female
Ilivilermiut	39 Male	33 Female
Ogjulikmiut	11 Male	8 Female
Utkuhikjalingmiut	18 Male	14 Female
	177	146 Total 323

Compiled from Knud Rasmussen's Census of 1923 and brought up-to-date from Hudson's Bay Company Statistics.

Left: Types of the Ilivilermiut group. Members of this group were the only Eskimos to see portions of the Franklin crews while still alive. From these people Schwatka and Rasmussen obtained accounts of the tragedy. Closely allied to their neighbours the Netsilik they have the same degree of culture.

Right: Types of the Netsilik group, the only Eskimos with whom McClintock came in contact. Plain unadorned clothing and long hair are still the fashion among central Canadian groups.

Left: A Netsilik sealing camp in the vicinity of Matty Island. McClintock found them sealing in the same neighbourhood in 1859, plentifully supplied with relics of the Franklin expedition.
Centre: Migrating Netsilik on the sea ice in Rae Strait during spring.
Right: Eskimo tents on the beach near Cape Herschel in June. In the same vicinity the people met units of the Franklin expedition in July 1848.

in the large quantity of slightly useful items of equipment they carried away from the ships. Such articles as sabres, curtain rods, copper lightning conductors, wooden tackle blocks, nautical instruments, blacksmith's tools, etc., not to mention the ponderous and ill devised sledges, are enlightening. As men marching for their lives, it behooved them to burden themselves with only such equipment as was absolutely essential. They seem to have adopted an opposite policy, and carried with them every single article which might be of even the slightest service.

The retreat would appear to have broken down in the vicinity of Terror Bay; probably through increasing sickness, exposure and exhaustion. Following the sinuosities of the coast-line—as they did—this would be about sixty or seventy miles distant from the vessels. How long it occupied them to reach this vicinity we have no means of knowing. But from the words of the Eskimos we are led to believe that some of those who continued on towards Back River were met in the vicinity of Cape Herschel—a short distance to the southward—when the shore water was in evidence and the sea ice decayed—approximately the middle of July. From this we may judge that progress thus far from the ships had been either most unreasonably slow or that very lengthy delays had taken place. On the other hand, the detachments the Eskimos came across may have been stragglers in the retreat. Others may have preceded them whom the Eskimos had no contact with and therefore no knowledge of.

It is quite evident that it was in the vicinity of Terror Bay a separation took place in the retreating party. A number commenced a return to the ships; we do not know how many, but undoubtedly the majority continued southward or there would not be so many traces left in that direction, particularly at and near Starvation Cove, in which locality alone nearly half the expedition are accounted for. There is no means of establishing exactly what circumstances brought about the return of a detachment to the ships. As McClintock suggested, it may have been for what provisions still remained on board, for surely those they had brought with them must even then have been on the point of exhaustion, as the progress had been so terribly slow. Or again, perhaps those unwilling or unable to proceed further with any hope of ultimately getting anywhere, decided to return to the ships as the only alternative objective to make for. All of the returning party did not reach their destination, as Lieutenant Irving's grave close to Victory Point testified. Those who did would have experienced great difficulty in doing so, owing to the advanced stage of the season and the imminent disruption of the ice. They would be unable to regain the land again for the same reasons.

The only contact any number of the retreating crews made with the Eskimos was apparently in the vicinity of Cape Herschel, where one or more units met a few wandering families. The meeting was to no material purpose as far as it benefited the needy white men. A trivial barter of seal flesh! The explosion of any hopes which the seamen centred in such a meeting! We can well understand the reactions of the Eskimos on seeing for the first time people of a different race, peculiarly dressed, and speaking a strange tongue. It reflects something in favour of their courage that they did not flee at the sight of such an apparition, when we take into consideration their spiritual and teratological beliefs, and the impact of the encounter. It is natural that their intercourse with the strangers would be tempered instinctively with caution and timidity. Insensible or apathetic to their plight and possible fate, they promptly withdrew from an experience which may well have appealed to their superstitions, in spite of the fact that they were aware of the existence of a race of white people, through the association of a neighbouring group with the Ross expedition eighteen years previously. It should also be noted that the physical appearance alone of the white men—evidently suffering from some malady—would create alarm in their minds due to their belief in the supernatural cause of disease and total ignorance of therapeutic treatment.

It has been pointed out on occasion that if the Franklin party had earlier sought out the Eskimos, fraternized with them, and secured their co-operation, a great number of them might well have been preserved. Such a supposition is unwarrantable, for no natives inhabited or habitually frequented the land closest to where the ships were beset in the ice. There is no evidence indeed that the Franklin expedition had any contact whatever with the Eskimos before abandoning their ships. If we consult the extent of the population of the locality through which the retreat lay as far as Back River, we will find that it contained at most some fifty hunters; scattered out over an extensive area, mostly inland at that period of the year, only a few of these could possibly have come in contact with the retreating explorers. To suggest that a few primitive Eskimos could support or materially assist—in addition to their own families—a large body of white men, is attributing too much to their skill as hunters and the extent of the available game resources at their disposal.

Continuing on from Cape Herschel the retreating detachments dwindled as men fell out on the way and died where later their remains were found at different points. Starvation Cove seems to have been almost the last stand; but believing the Eskimos we can picture a small number, dragging to the last one of the boats, who actually did reach as far as Montreal Island, within sight of the mouth of the river which was to have borne them inland on that visionary journey to a meeting with their countrymen. That any of them reached this, a distance of nearly three hundred miles from the ships, is to be marvelled at when we consider the character and severity of the vain struggle. Surely the trial of Scott and his party in the Antarctic was not greater or more magnanimous just because a recovered diary gave us an intimate picture of their superb acquittal, their touching emotions, and their final submission.

The Eskimos inhabiting the King William Island and Adelaide Peninsula areas do not spend their summer months on the coast. When the sea is open and freed from its thick coating of ice, it is a closed book to them, for they are not a sea people. Large mammals, such as whales and walrus, which inhabit the sea in other Arctic vicinities are absent in these waters. It is only when the sea is in a frozen state that the natives live upon its surface and subsist upon the seals they procure through the breathing holes. For this reason the population is dispersed fishing and caribou hunting inland during the summer and autumn periods of the year. It was not until they came down to the coast in the early winter of 1848 that they discovered the tragic happening which had taken place on their shores. That winter and the ensuing spring they came

across the dead bodies of white men at different points, and proceeded to appropriate the belongings they found with them. So precious was the wood and many of the articles which were to be had that their efforts were directed to a thorough search in order to secure all that was available.

Late in the spring of the following year, 1849, an even more amazing discovery was made by the Eskimos. Out in the sea, off the west coast of Adelaide Peninsula, a huge ship was seen frozen solidly in the thick sea ice. We have already read some of their own accounts concerning the discovery and what happened to the ship afterwards. If it is true that they succeeded in cutting a hole through the hull which caused it to fill with water it could not possibly sink until the ice broke up during the latter part of July; the ice itself would bear it up until that time. It would therefore remain in their possession for at least four weeks, during which period they would be free to move much material ashore from it.

Something drastically final did undoubtedly occur to the ship to cause it to disappear a short time after its discovery. As Rasmussen points out, if the natives had had access to it for any lengthy period of time they would have been in possession of much material from it even in the year 1932. At that time the Arviligjuak and neighbouring groups were observed to have worked into their hunting weapons and domestic utensils much material from Sir John Ross's ship *Victory*, which was abandoned on the east coast of Boothia Peninsula in the year 1832. On the other hand they had little material in their possession traceable to the Franklin expedition. The inference is as the Eskimos claimed—the *Victory* remained a prey to them for a number of years but the Franklin ship sank a short time after its discovery.

The discovered ship, which was possibly the *Erebus*, for she was larger and more strongly built than her consort, would appear to have drifted out of the heavy ice in Victoria Strait during the late summer or fall of the same year in which her crew abandoned her. That would mean that it occupied the vessel approximately three years to drift at a slow rate to the open water south of that belt of heavy ice which was the prime factor in the destruction of the expedition. It is an ironic contemplation that had the crews only remained with their ships for another few months, one of them at least was actually to escape undamaged to those same ice-free coastal waters for which Franklin was striving three years previously when he was fatefully beset. Carried south by the current the vessel was brought to a stationary position near the mainland where the natives found her, by the freezing over of the sea again at the onset of the next winter; which would be about the first week in October, just over five months following the abandonment which took place the 22nd of April. Thus the inglorious end of one of the ships is made known to us even though through the obscurity of Eskimo testimony such as it was recorded.

The presence of the ship in the locality in which the Eskimos found her is, we may presume, the important factor which intervened to turn them from a searching investigation of that stretch of coast-line between Cape Crozier and Cape Felix, otherwise it is inconceivable they would have failed to link it with their discoveries to the south or that it would entirely have escaped their attention until the coming of McClintock. Very likely the association in their minds of the marching white men and the discovered ship precluded any further enquiry as to where the travellers had come from. That particular area of the island is most unproductive of game at all seasons of the year, and the closely packed heavy floes in the neighbouring sea obstruct sealing operations. For these reasons it is rarely frequented at all by the natives; were it otherwise the Victory Point Record would surely never have survived.

What of the other ill-fated vessel, probably the *Terror?* Did she fail to withstand the crushing force of the floes and perish in Victoria Strait? Is it true that the Netsilingmiut sighted her also, beset off Cape Felix, and were in a position to conclude that she foundered? We do not know definitely! Our enlightenment is limited to such a vague account as McClintock was able to obtain from old Oo-na-lee, who traced a map upon the snow and pointed towards Cape Felix.

The accounts obtained from Eskimo sources by the various investigators whose findings we have already outlined may be subject to some disparagement due to their vagueness and inconsistency. It must, however, be remembered that, with the exception of the narrations recorded by Rasmussen, the translations were not literal and there are strong grounds for suspecting the lingual proficiency of most of the explorers who made them. Rae possessed what we may call a working knowledge of the language, but his fluency was limited. Anderson stated in his report that he felt the need of an Eskimo interpreter as he had no knowledge of the language himself. McClintock did not profess to speak the Eskimo tongue; he relied entirely on his interpreter, a Dane who had lived in Greenland and there acquired a knowledge of the local dialect. According to McClintock, however, he experienced the greatest difficulty in understanding the Netsilingmiut at all. Had it been otherwise we would most likely have learned considerably more of the details of the tragedy from that early voyage. Hall possessed a smattering of the Hudson Bay dialect, and utilized the services of a native named "Eskimo Joe," who had worked on the American whaling ships and there acquired a smattering of English. It is not surprising that this strange combination of "lingua franca", coupled with Hall's highly imaginative temperament and lack of scientific attainments, led him into many pitfalls which depreciated the value of his work. It is on record in the official publication covering Schwatka's voyage and search that he and his companions in setting out from New York City had no previous experience whatever of the Arctic nor of the Eskimo race. Their command of the language was limited to what they acquired during a few months sojourn with the Hudson Bay natives; in addition they had the assistance of that same "Eskimo Joe" who had previously served Hall.

No harsh judgment can be unreservedly levelled at the Eskimos for failing to give clear and accurate accounts within the extent of their knowledge. The means was not on hand early enough to obtain such from them. How different would have been the value of their contribution if a trained anthropologist had come on the scene early enough. Such a specialist would not only have understood their language but also their psychological and intellectual peculiarities. It is only in the light of the theme or purport of the interpretations accorded their combined statements that we can evaluate their testimony on a whole.

In conclusion it is necessary to touch only on a few leading issues which even today are the cause of misunderstanding, and tend to perpetuate that atmos-

phere of mystery which is alleged to surround the fate of the Franklin expedition.

Of the one hundred and five officers and men who abandoned the ships only some sixty odd have been definitely accounted for by the graves and skeletons discovered during successive years. What happened to the remainder; are they really unaccounted for?

The sea ice was the broad highway on which the retreat took place; it was on the sea and not on the shore that the crews marched and hauled the sledges. The rocky and uneven nature of the coast would effectively obstruct sledge travel on the land and greatly impede progress on foot, Surely it is inevitable that many succumbed on the sea ice as well as on the beaches. When halts were made and camps erected the lower beaches would naturally be chosen, if indeed all the camps were set up on the land. Almost all of the skeletons discovered by Europeans were on, or just above, the high water level; undoubtedly abnormally high tides in the course of time removed many others. The Eskimos clearly indicated the action of the sea as removing many skeletons which they had previously discovered. At Starvation Cove so close were the remains to the sea level that the skeletons were later buried in the sand and seaweed on the foreshore. In Terror Bay, where they had seen many skeletons on a low islet, every trace had been removed by the sea by the time Schwatka came on the scene. The activity of predacious animals over such a long period of time would also account for the removal of further traces. And then we definitely know that a number returned to the vessels, many of which may have perished out on the sea ice miles away from the land. As evidenced by the Eskimos report that at least one dead body was found on board the discovered ship, it is a logical inference that others may have gone down with the second vessel. McClintock, whose sound judgment and reasoning were valuable qualities in all his observations wrote these few words seventy-five years ago: "It is hardly needful to observe that the bodies of those who were overtaken by death upon the ice, found their final rest at the bottom of the sea, upon the summer thaw of 1848". It is an extravagant and unintelligent conviction that any number of the Franklin expedition are still mysteriously unaccounted for.

How can we account for the non-discovery of further records along the route of the march, as well as the official journals and private papers of the expedition? Is there a likelihood that they are still in existence and one day may be brought to light?

The answer to the question is that the logs and papers were discovered and have long since perished. It is unreasonable to hope that any of them ever escaped the Eskimos. They are irretrievably lost! They were carried far enough south to convey them to a locality well populated with natives. No effective disposition was possible to ensure their preservation from their hands. Any alien mark or unusual phenomenon on their native terrain could not escape their keen powers of perception, or survive their curiosity. The only hope lay in the Eskimos not frequenting the locality of their whereabouts until they were responsibly recovered; this was the circumstance which preserved the Victory Point Record. We can reasonably accept the native account obtained by Lieutenant Schwatka to the effect that at least a portion of them were found by the Eskimos in a lifeboat at Starvation Cove, which was the focal point of greatest mortality. Enclosed in an iron box which they forced open the unfamiliar contents were thrown aside or distributed to the children as playthings. It should be remembered that King William Island has been inhabited continuously since the year 1923 by Europeans. With the cooperation of the Eskimos, every endeavour has been made since that year in the hope that ultimately a discovery might result. The inference from any investigation is that no further written word from the Franklin party survives today. The only means the explorers had at their disposal to preserve their papers was to utilize the loose rocks and conceal them beneath a cairn. Such a landmark would only serve the more readily to attract the attention of the Eskimos.

During the autumn of the year 1930, Victory Point was visited by an aerial expedition which had as its ostensible object the verification of a report which disclosed that the remains of Sir John Franklin were interred there in a cemented vault.[17] The substance of the report, which was of course groundless, is an instance of that gross misunderstanding and imaginative licence which attributed to an unfortunate group of Eskimos hundreds of miles distant from King William Land, absurd and fantastic tales concerning an event which they had no contact with whatever, or even intercourse with those of their fellow countrymen who had. That such credulity should exist in the year 1930 as the expectation of discovering Sir John Franklin's tomb is sufficient reason for making some observations on the probable manner of his burial.

From a study of the Victory Point Record we learn that all the members of the expedition were well, including Sir John Franklin, a few days previous to his death. His death occurred suddenly, and we may judge that the crews were in a fairly sound state of health at the time, as this was the first death to have taken place since the besetment of the ships in the heavy ice off King William Island. The men being then fit and well, it is reasonable to expect that had burial ashore been planned and carried out, the grave of the illustrious navigator would have been saliently marked by some fitting and permanent monument to perpetuate the spot of his last resting place.

Subsequent to the discovery of the Victory Point Record both McClintock and Hobson had this in mind, and closely investigated the land between Victory Point and Cape Felix, but failed to find any trace of a grave. The Eskimos had not then visited the vicinity to possibly lessen by demolition or interference the conspicuousness of even a modest cairn or head board. Schwatka came twenty years later, examining the shore and neighbouring terrain during the summer season when the snow had entirely melted exposing the bare ground, yet his efforts were unrewarded by the discovery of the grave he sought. More contemporary searchers have met with the same negative result.

It is obvious then that the remains of Sir John Franklin, as well as those of the twenty officers and men who subsequently died on board the ships before their abandonment, were interred at sea. Their tomb was the seaman's grave, beneath those vast undulations of bluish sea ice in which the remainder of their companions were fast approaching crisis and a swift deplorable end.

What space of time elapsed from the abandonment of the ships until the last survivors had died? Did any of them succeed in prolonging their existence upon the resources of the country?

Climatic and subsistence considerations, the testimony of the Eskimos, and all indications *a priori*, further the conclusion that the end was a swift reality. It came with certainty before September had brought the frost and first snow flurries of approaching winter. Possibly before the sea ice had disrupted and the waves of the open sea lapped the shores; before the sun had long commenced to dip again below the northern horizon; before the wild ducks had headed south that autumn of 1848, the last survivors of the Franklin expedition had passed away. There is not a shred of evidence to support the speculation that any may have succeeded in prolonging their lives into the following winter. Their line of retreat was plainly, unerringly marked with their bones; if any had deviated from it they would have left the same sad but convincing traces. McClintock recognized the futility of such a speculation when he wrote: "The supposition that some may have protracted their existence amongst the Esquimaux, or upon the resources of the country, is altogether untenable".[11]

There is no plausible likelihood that any further disclosures will ever result to give us a clearer estimate of the tragedy. Time and the immensity and isolation of the North have cancelled all hope. But there is no justification for assuming that the fate of the Franklin expedition is a mystery just because every mournful detail is not known to us. The mystery was solved by the gallant McClintock in 1859. Imprisoned in the inexorable clutches of that glittering ice, and with a dreadful end in sight, the dauntless sailors made a last bold bid for life by deserting their ships, and their familiar element, the sea. Like a band of shadowy waifs they embarked upon an unknown journey in a strange unreal land; they died summarily, pathetically, but nobly in the cause of science and discovery, and for the honour of their country's name.

Their last great sacrifice is not effaced! Their spirit lives today! Wherever the call goes out and men set forth to explore and conquer the last hidden corners of our globe, they follow in their footsteps. What more is there to seek to tell?

To the memory of
FRANKLIN,
CROZIER, FITZJAMES,
and all their
gallant brother officers and faithful
companions who have suffered and perished
in the cause of science and
the service of their country,

THIS TABLET
is erected near the spot where
they passed their first Arctic
winter, and whence they issued
forth to conquer difficulties or

TO DIE.

It commemorates the grief of their
admiring countrymen and friends
and the anguish, subdued by faith,
of her who has lost, in the heroic
leader of the expedition, the most
devoted and affectionate of
husbands.

"AND SO HE BRINGETH THEM UNTO THE HAVEN WHERE THEY WOULD BE"
1855.[18]

The bronze bust of Sir John Franklin in the National Portrait Gallery in London. Lucchesi, 1898.

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14. The North-West Passage. Being the Record of a Voyage of Exploration of the ship Gjoa, 1903-1907. Roald Amundsen. London. Constable and Co., 1908.
15. Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition 1921-24. Vol. VIII No. 1-2. Knud Rasmussen, Ph.D. Copenhagen. Gyldendalske, Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1931.
16. Some Further Traces of the Franklin Retreat. William Gibson. Journal of Royal Geog. Soc., London. May 1932.
17. Franklin Investigations. Canada's Western Arctic. Major L. T. Burwash. Department of the Interior. Ottawa. The King's Printer, 1931.
18. Inscription from Memorial Tablet to Franklin Expedition, incorporated in Cenotaph erected at Beechey Island to seamen who perished in the Belcher Search and Relief Expedition 1852-54.

THE COMPANY NEWS REEL

The London Fur Trade Association dinner at the Dorchester Hotel in London, February 1937. The chairman, P. Ashley Cooper, is standing beside H.R.H. the Duke of Kent, who was the guest of honour. Also at the head table are Lt.-Col. J. B. P. Karslake and F. A. Stacpole. At the Company table directly in front of the royal guest are Ralph Parsons, Elwyn Ingrams, R. C. Geddes, W. E. Beynes, W. Gibson, F. L. Heyes, H. Wonnall, R. F. Frayling, M. Gibbs Smith.

Sydney Smith, of the Vancouver Wholesale, in the tough spot of having to break trail in the cross-country race at the Canadian Ski Championships in Banff, March 1937.

George W. Allan, Chairman of the Canadian Committee, presenting a medal to A. E. Nosworthy, who retires after forty-five years of service in the Company.

This picture was received from George M. Douglas, of Lakefield, Ontario, with this comment: "The enclosed picture was taken by me at Fort Smith, N.W.T., on June 22nd 1911, the occasion being the coronation of George V. My journal for that date reads: 'Thursday, June 22nd. Fine bright morning. Up at 6 and we all assembled around the flagstaff at 6.30. The bishop read some prayers, we hoisted the flag, gave three cheers for George V, and sang God Save the King—.' The lady in the picture is Mrs. Pearce with her little girl. I think the man on her left is her husband. Bishop Breynat is in the centre. The men at right are Robert W. Service (stooping), Gerald Card, Lionel Douglas, Capt. Mills, and Bell, then agent for the N.W.T."

Two Fur Traders—W. O. Douglas, of the Fur Trade Commissioner's office, and W. E. Brown, manager of the Nelson River district—looking very satisfied with themselves. The reason—their bachelor days will soon be over.

Above: The Governor, P. Ashley Cooper, and Deputy Governor, Sir Alexander Murray, are met at the station by George W. Allan, Chairman of the Canadian Committee, on their recent visit to Winnipeg.

Right: Sergeant Covell of the R.C.M.P. shaking hands with Father Gatty at Fort Simpson on the Mackenzie river.

Matt Berry, a Canadian Airways pilot and winner of the McKee trophy, checking freight at one of the Company's northern posts.

This photo was taken at Carlton House, July, 1877, during a sitting of the Council of Officers, not was the last Council graced by the presence of Sir D. A. Smith in Rupertsland.

Left to right: Front Row sitting: Factor Roger MacDonald - Isle a la Crosse District. Factor William McKay - Fort Pitt, Sask.(or Fetherl Clerk George E. Davidson - Accountant at Carlton House.

Middle Row sitting: Chief Factor Lawrence Clark— Carlton House, Lower Sask. District. Governor James A. Grahame, Fort Garry, Manitoba. Sir Donald A. Smith - Winnipeg, M.P. for Ottawa. Chief Factor Richard Hardisty - Edmonton House, Upper Sask. Dist.

Third Row Standing: Chief Factor Archibald McDonald - Fort Qu'Appelle, Swan River District. Chief Factor Roderick McFarlane - Fort Chipewyan, Athabasca District. Rev. James Settee - Anglican Native Missionary. W.F. Gardiner - #Clark Fort Chipewyan Chief Factor James McDougall - Peace River District - # I am doubtful of this identity.

(Signed) Angus Mackay.

Sept. 4th, 1878

Rev. James Settee was a Cree-Saulteaux Indian, educated at St. John's College. He established the first Christian Church on the plains at Fishing Lakes about 1865, at the present site of Fort Qu'Appelle. Died 1907. Buried at St. Johns.

LONDON OFFICE NEWS

Since our last notes, the Governor and Deputy Governor have visited Canada together. They spent a few days in New York, Montreal and Winnipeg.

E. Ingrams, manager of the London Fur Department, has left for his visit to New York, Winnipeg and various Fur Trade posts. R. A. Delf has gone to Windhoek, Southwest Africa, to superintend the organization of the Company's collecting agency for Persian lambskins.

Late in January we had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. Ralph Parsons, the Fur Trade Commissioner, who came over to attend the general fur sale. While in London, Mr. Parsons was invited to go to the British Broadcasting Corporation and record a short talk, which was later broadcast in a news programme, together with "shots" taken at the sale in Beaver Hall and among the foreign buyers in the Strathcona room. The broadcast made a brief, but lively, contribution to the sound picture of the week's events in London.

We have also received visits from E. Fletcher, the Fur Trade controller in Winnipeg, and W. Gibson, of the Western Arctic district.

His Excellency Abdul Majid Khan, president of the Afghan National Bank, while in London to discuss the Persian lambskin business, visited Hudson's Bay House on 2nd February, and was received by the Governor and Deputy Governor; speaking through an interpreter, he showed great interest in the Company's records and history. Later in the day he was the Company's guest at the London Fur Trade Association's annual dinner at the Dorchester Hotel.

This dinner was presided over by the Governor as president of the association, and for the first time a member of the Royal Family was present, H.R.H. the Duke of Kent being the principal guest. The Duke spoke to more than four hundred members of the trade gathered from all parts of the world, proposing the toast of the association and commending its progress and achievements; the Governor responded, welcoming the Duke on behalf of the association. The Company was well represented by both directors and officials, and Mr. Parsons and Mr. Gibson joined the party at our Fur Department's table.

Sir Patrick Duncan, G.C.M.G., the new Governor-General of South Africa, came to Hudson's Bay House to see the pictures and archives, and in connection with his visit the Governor gave a luncheon which was attended by: The Rt. Hon. Lord Kennet, G.B.E., D.S.O., The Most Hon. the Marquess of Lothian, C.H., Lt.-Col. J. Beaumont Neilson, C.M.G., D.S.O., Mr. J. C. Denison Pender, Mr. F. R. Phillips, M.C., The Rt. Hon. Sir Malcolm Robertson, G.C.M.G., K.B.E., The Hon. Francis J. R. Rodd, in addition to our own directors.

The Company had a splendid exhibit of raw furs at the British Industries Fair at the White City in the middle of February. Representatives of the Company were present when various members of the Royal Family paid visits. Their Majesties the King, the Queen and Queen Mary, and Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Kent, the Princess Royal and the Duchess of Gloucester, all came at different times, and there were many comments on our magnificent display of white foxes.

And address of loyalty and congratulation was presented by the Company to His Majesty the King on the occasion of his accession to the throne.

The annual General Court was held on 14th April in Beaver Hall, and subsequently the Governor entertained the directors and heads of departments to luncheon at the Cannon Street Hotel. The Hon. R. B. Job, W. C. Job and Alfred Lampson were also present.

On 22nd April the Governor and Committee gave their annual luncheon to the Rhodes scholars from Canada and Newfoundland at the Savoy Hotel. After the guests had been welcomed by the Governor in a short speech, The Rt. Hon. Malcolm MacDonald, M.P., the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, spoke proposing the toast of "The Memory of Cecil Rhodes."

In addition to Mr. MacDonald, the luncheon was attended by The Hon. Vincent Massey, High Commissioner for Canada; The Hon. W. R. Howley, K.C., vice-chairman of the Newfoundland Commission of Government; The Rt. Hon. Lord Plender, G.B.E., senior partner in Deloitte, Plender, Griffiths & Company; The Rt. Hon. Lord Hyndley, director of the Bank of England; The Rt. Hon. L. S. Amery, M.P., Rhodes trustee; Sir Robert Williams, Bt., managing director of Tanganyika Concessions, Limited; Sir Edward Peacock, G.C.V.O.; Sir Alexander Murray, K.C.I.E., C.B.E.; Mr. D. J. Davies, C.B.E., trade commissioner for Newfoundland; Baron Emile B. d'Erlanger, chairman of Erlangers, Limited; Dr. C. K. Allen, warden of Rhodes House, Oxford; Mr. E. F. Millar, assistant secretary of the Rhodes Trust; Lt.-Col. J. B. P. Karslake; Mr. H. A. Reincke; Captain Victor Cazalet, M.C., M.P.; Mr. Ian P. R. Napier, M.C.; Mr. P. A. Clews, European manager, Canadian National Railways; Mr. J. C. Patteson, European general manager, Canadian Pacific Railway; Mr. F. A. Stacpole; Mr. J. Chadwick Brooks; and the following seventeen Rhodes scholars: Messrs. J. Chapdelaine, J. L. Delisle, C. B. Fergusson, J. E. L. Graham, J. T. Howley, G. Ignatieff, W. R. Jackett, A. J. Johnson, F. W. O. Jones, T. McKeown, J. B. Reid, A. C. Smith, J. M. Teakles, O. H. Warwick, J. D. Weir, S. P. Wheelock, H. B. Mayo.

Dr. Fleming, the Bishop of the Arctic, who has been in London for several months, paid us visits both at Hudson's Bay House and Beaver House, where he came to see the Governor.

In addition to the distinguished visitors mentioned above, the archives have been inspected by Mr. Vyvian Hiller, Southern Rhodesian Government Archives Department; Miss P. D. Linney, editor of the Port of London Authority Magazine; and D. G. G. Kerr, M.A., McGill University.

THE FUR TRADE

(Owing to the unusual demand for space in this issue that resulted from the inclusion of the Franklin story, we have been forced to delete some items from the Fur Trade News. We regret that this should be necessary, and we hope that for our next issue we will be swamped with Fur Trade news items, which we promise to publish.—Editors.)

Fur Trade Commissioner's Office

The Governor, Mr. P. Ashley Cooper, and the Deputy Governor, Sir Alexander Murray, spent some time at the Fur Trade offices during their brief stay in Winnipeg in the latter part of March.

The Fur Trade Commissioner returned from London, England, February 28, having crossed to New York on the *Queen Mary*, and spent a few days in Montreal and Ottawa before coming on to Winnipeg. At the beginning of April, he spent some time in Edmonton and during May again visited Edmonton, Vancouver and other western points.

M. R. Lubbock, of the London office, who has been attached to the Fur Trade during the past year, was transferred recently to the Canadian Committee office.

J. C. Donald attended Fromm's silver fox sale in February, and in the latter part of April went to Esquimalt for naval training.

Miss M. Lumbers resigned from the F.T.C.O. staff April 15 to be married to W. O. Douglas. The wedding will take place in Winnipeg May 15. Before leaving, Miss Lumbers was presented with a case of flatware by the staff. W. E. Brown, district manager of Nelson River, is also joining the ranks of the benedicts. His marriage to Miss Marion Williams of Winnipeg is, we understand, to take place June 2. We wish both these couples the best of luck.

Elwyn Ingrams, manager of the Company's fur sales in London, arrived in New York at the beginning of May and is to make an extended visit in Canada. He was met at New York by H. P. Warne, who accompanied him to Winnipeg, calling at Montreal en route.

S. H. Parsons, Labrador district manager, was in Winnipeg during the latter part of March, after completing a winter inspection of the Labrador posts and flying out from North West River to Rimouski.

Miss I. Barker has been transferred from Saskatchewan district to the F.T.C.O.

W. Gibson returned to Winnipeg at the beginning of May after a holiday in London and Ireland.

Among out-of-town visitors at the office recently, we have noticed Bishop Breynat,

of Mackenzie River; Bishop Geddes, of the Yukon; Col. J. K. Cornwall; Harvey Weber, of The Pas; Superintendent Sandys-Wunsch, of the R.C.M. Police; Dr. R. G. Law, of the Canadian National Railways; and Alex. Flett, of Pine Falls.

A. H. Clyne, manager of the Mingan Fur Farm, which is now closed, has been transferred to the Bird's Hill Fur Farm.

Robert Wright, manager of the Bird's Hill Fur Farm, reports a litter of four fisher, all of which are doing well. The production of foxes and mink is also reported to be above average.

Considerable damage was sustained at the Edmonton depot at the end of March as a result of a fire in the premises above.

G. Harris has been transferred from Toronto Fur Purchasing Agency to Winnipeg depot.

Captain Thos. Smellie left for Halifax at the end of April to get the *Nascopie* ready for her northern voyage. The *Nascopie* will be sailing from Montreal at 10 a.m. D.S.T., July 10, and will call at the northern posts in the following order: Hebron, Port Burwell, Lake Harbour, Stupart's Bay, Sugluk, Dorset, Wolstenholme, Southampton Island, Cape Smith, Port Harrison, Churchill, Chesterfield Inlet, Wolstenholme, Lake Harbour, Craig Harbour, Fort Hearne. Arctic Bay, Pond's Inlet, Clyde, Pangnirtung and Port Burwell. It is expected she will arrive back at Halifax about September 27.

Captain Isaac Barbour and Steve Bradbury passed through Winnipeg on their way to Churchill, where they will join the *Fort Severn*, the former as master and the latter as engineer.

Dr. MacKinnon, late of Pangnirtung, was a visitor at the office recently.

E. W. Fletcher, who, with Mrs. Fletcher and their family, has been holidaying in England, is expected back in Winnipeg about the latter part of May.

Ralph H. Wilson, of the Edmonton Fur Purchasing Agency, passed through Winnipeg at the beginning of May on his way to London, England, where he will take a course in fur grading at the warehouse during the summer months.

British Columbia District

J. Milne returned to district office on March 12 from a two-months inspection trip. Points visited included Prince George, Fort St. James, Manson Creek, Tacla, Babine, Old Fort, Topley, Hazelton, Kitwanga, Prince Rupert, Port Simpson, Stewart and Vancouver. Early in May he will leave by air on a visit to Athabasca district posts. On 21st May he will leave on the regular summer inspection of British Columbia posts.

On 1st June Manson Creek outpost will be given the status of a main post.

The Fur Trade Commissioner was in Edmonton on Company business from 5th to 10th April, and paid us another visit on 3rd May. Messrs. Chesshire and Warne, of F.T.C.O., also visited the office in April.

A tri-weekly mail service is now operated between Vanderhoof and Fort St. James, instead of former weekly service.

A regular weekly air mail service from Prince George to Manson Creek, Tacla and Fort St. James will commence at first open water. Post offices are to be opened at Manson and Tacla.

Commencing on 22nd May, the Findlay River air mail will go north from Prince George instead of from Hudson's Hope. The new route will take in McLeod's Lake post, where a post office is being established. United Air Transport, of Edmonton, is operating these services.

Apprentice C. D. Stevens, of Babine post, has been promoted to the charge of Old Fort. Apprentice R. S. Cunningham has been promoted to the charge of Manson Creek. Apprentice J. Copeland has been transferred to McLeod's Lake, where he will be in charge during the summer months.

W. H. T. Tipton returned from furlough in England and is on his way to Telegraph Creek, where he will resume his duties as assistant. Mrs. Tipton and children are still in England, but will return soon.

We welcome to the district Apprentice Desmond Pitts, of Winnipeg, who is now stationed at Fort St. James post. Apprentice Pitts received his training in the new Winnipeg school.

L. S. McBride, clerk at Telegraph Creek, is relieving William Glennie at McDames Creek for a few weeks during the summer. Mr. Glennie is coming "outside" on a short furlough, and we have a "hunch" he will go back in double harness.

The following post managers will go to Vancouver this summer for a course in fur grading at our Fur Purchasing Agency: O. E. Butterill, of Hazelton; W. G. Crisp, of McLeod's Lake; W. H. Houston, of Port Simpson; and J. S. Nelson, of Kitwanga.

Preparations are now under way for the building of a new dwelling house and warehouse at McDames Creek, and a new warehouse at Liard. Further improvements in regard to buildings are contemplated for Manson Creek and Tacla.

Mrs. L. B. Wrinch, wife of Dr. Wrinch, Hazelton, passed away on 20th February.

As from 1st June Athabasca district posts will be incorporated in the British Columbia district.

Western Arctic District

The district manager returned to Winnipeg on March 4, having travelled by air from Reid Island, Victoria Island, by Canadian Airways plane, after carrying out the inspection of the following posts: Coppermine, Kugaryuak, Bathurst Inlet, Cambridge Bay and Reid Island. A. Gavin accompanied the district manager on inspection. A visit was paid to our transport vessels, the M.S. *Fort James* and the M.S. *Aklavik*, which were frozen in with their crews at Reid Island and Bathurst Inlet respectively. The inspection of eastern posts necessitated approximately one thousand miles of sled travel, and two thousand two hundred and ninety miles by air. All members of the staff were well and in excellent spirits.

F. R. Ross flew to Edmonton from Reid Island at the beginning of March, and plans to return by air in August. Mrs. Ross has taken very well to the Arctic and is looking forward to joining her husband again.

Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Gall spent the winter on the M.S. *Aklavik*, and are looking forward to summer and a holiday in the Old Country this fall.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Nichols at Bathurst Inlet are delighted with their surroundings, declaring Burnside to be the finest place in the North. They report Emily Elizabeth, born February 3rd, as doing very well.

Mr. and Mrs. F. B. Milne, Cambridge Bay, were in excellent spirits and very fit. Cambridge Bay has quite a white population. For the second winter the R.C.M.P. *St. Roch* is wintering there with full crew of members of the force.

C. Reiach and Apprentice I. Wilson have spent the winter at Coppermine. Apprentice Wilson has taken charge of Kugaryuak post this spring. Mr. Reiach is due for furlough this fall, and plans a holiday in Scotland.

A. Gavin and J. J. Wood are at present en route by sled to establish Perry River post. The buildings are to be taken down and re-erected on Flagstaff Island some seven miles from the present location. Apprentice J. J. Wood spent some time at Bathurst Inlet post before leaving for Perry River. Apprentice E. Donovan spent the winter at Cambridge Bay and will be transferred to Fort Collinson this summer. Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Johnston at Aklavik report all well. Mr. Johnston inspected Tuktuk post during the winter. Apprentice A. Figgures has been stationed at Aklavik and likes the country well.

Mail was received from R. H. Kilgour, Baillie Island, who reports that none of the boats reached Banksland last fall. The entire coast is experiencing the worst fur year for a long time.

L. A. Learmonth and Apprentice D. G. Sturrock are carrying on at King William Land, although no outfit was delivered last year. They moved into a snow house in March, but have maintained very regular communication with district office through short wave station CZ2L operated by Mr. Sturrock.

J. E. Sidgwick arrived at Fort Collinson after a long hard trip from Reid Island, arriving January 3. He spent Christmas at a native camp in Prince Albert Sound.

Apprentice E. H. Riddell has returned to Aklavik from his post at Herschel Island, where he spent the winter months. George McLeod is in charge of Tuktuk post this winter. C. V. Rowan is enjoying his furlough in Vancouver and will return to Fort Collinson this summer. R. Jardine spent the winter in Bermuda, and recently returned to his home in Cornerbrook, Newfoundland. He is expected at district office about the middle of May.

A. G. Eccles, of Wilmot Island, flew out to Edmonton this winter and spent a few days in Winnipeg en route to his home in England, where he will spend a few months before returning north by plane in July.

We heard recently from Patsy Klengenberg of Wilmot Island, and were sorry to learn that his wife had died of heart failure.

There has been quite a bit of travelling within the district during the winter by members of the R.C.M.P. and the missionaries. Bishop Breynat made a very successful flight in his "Waco" plane along the Arctic coast, and this new departure gives us a different conception of Arctic winter travel and what can be accomplished in a comparatively short time. Pilot Ruddy Heuss flew to Bathurst Inlet and brought out A. McLellan, who is trapping in that locality, with a badly frozen toe.

The new Anglican residential school at Aklavik has been filled to capacity this winter, and is a very fine building. The staff, under Principal A. E. Sheppard, have accomplished a lot during the first winter. The new Anglican hospital also was opened this winter, and is a very fine building, fully equipped and up to date.

An interesting experiment will be carried out this summer when the M.S. *Aklavik* will attempt to connect with the

R.M.S. *Nascopie* at Brentford Bay on Boothia Isthmus. The *Aklavik* will proceed from Cambridge Bay with King William Land supplies and continue through Bellot Strait to meet the *Nascopie* around September 25. W. Gibson, who recently returned from a holiday in the Old Country, will return to King William Land via the *Nascopie* and the *Aklavik*. Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Gall will also take passage on the *Nascopie* if this attempt is successful. We will be shipping supplies from Montreal this summer consigned to points which have been supplied from Vancouver and Edmonton in previous years.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Johnston, of Aklavik, on the birth of a son, Douglas, on May 8. Mrs. Johnston and the baby are both doing well.

Mackenzie-Athabasca District

The district manager spent the winter months visiting the Athabasca section of the district as well as the Liard River posts. A departure in the route of travel was made by crossing with aeroplane from Fort Nelson to Hay Lakes and Upper Hay River posts instead of travelling to these posts via Fort Vermilion as in the past, and Fort Liard post was also visited, using aeroplane from Fort St. John and Fort Nelson instead of via Fort Simpson as in the past.

P. Forman, of Sturgeon Lake post, accompanied by his wife and two children left in February for furlough in Scotland.

C. H. J. Winter inspected Wabasca post and outposts in March.

It is with regret that we have to record the death in Edmonton of Stanfield Lord Ryan, son of Mr. and Mrs. G. P. Ryan, of Ryan Brothers, Fort Smith Portage. The deceased was twenty-four years of age and was well known at Fort McMurray.

Paul Fontaine, an old Company employee and pensioner, died at Fort McMurray in February. He was well over ninety years of age and his recollection of events goes back for many years. Paul was well known around Fort McMurray and will be sadly missed.

In April Louis Roy, late of Snowdrift post, reported back in Edmonton after spending furlough in the east and is now at Fort Nelson post relieving temporarily.

Robert Middleton, of Fort Chipewyan post, arrived in Edmonton early in April in order to make preliminary arrangements for the spring buying trip down the Athabasca river.

The Right Reverend Bishop Breynat, of the Roman Catholic Diocese of the Mackenzie, paid us a visit this month.

At the time of writing danger conditions, so far as flooding is concerned, appear to have passed, as the Peace river, Clear Water and Athabasca rivers have now gone out without much trouble, although ice jams were feared.

The first bank serving the Lake Athabasca mining field was established in April at Goldfields by the Bank of Montreal.

It is with the deepest regret that we have to record the death at Fort Vermilion on 28th April of Mrs. A. W. P. Clarke, who is survived by her husband and large family of grown-up sons and daughters, to whom we extend the deepest sympathy, knowing as we do that the late Mrs. Clarke will be sadly missed, as she was highly respected in the Fort Vermilion community.

Mackenzie River Transport

His Excellency the Governor-General, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Redfern, and A.D.C. will be the guests of the Hudson's Bay Company on board the Company's vessels during the coming summer. His Excellency will leave Waterways during the latter part of July on the S.S. *Athabasca River*, transferring at Smith Portage to the S.S. *Distributor*. Company posts will be visited en route to Aklavik. It is understood that His Excellency and his party intend to return by Royal Canadian Air Force planes from Aklavik.

There is every indication that the coming season down north will be the busiest in the history of the Company. The shipments for the Western Arctic district will be heavier than last year, whilst the mining development on Great Slave Lake and Lake Athabasca should mean a much greater volume of freight for both these districts.

J. A. Davis and a crew of shipwrights have been at work at the shipyards since the first of April carrying out the usual spring repairs, major repairs to the hull of the S.S. *Distributor* and the construction of two new one hundred and fifty ton barges for duty on Lake Athabasca.

The transport office closed at Winnipeg on 30th April and opened on the same date at Waterways.

Postings: Waterways, general agent H. N. Petty; accountant, L. D. Hughes. Fort Smith, agent, J. G. Woolison; manager Hotel Mackenzie, Paul Kaeser. Fort Fitzgerald, agent, S. P. Porter; Peace River, agent, P. J. Carey. S.S. *Athabasca River*, master, Harvey Alexander; pilot, Wm. Loutit; mates, A. T. Janes and J. McKenna; engineers, Geo. King and A. L. Scott; Purser, J. Williamson; M.T. *Pelly Lake*, master, O. Browne; mate, F. Hansley; engineers, G. Johnson and F. W. Skinner. S.S. *Distributor*, master, Don Naylor; pilot, Johnny Berens; mates, M. MacDonald and F. M. Smith; engineers, Chris Ozol and W. J. Malcolm; purser, Harold Gaskell. M.S. *Dease Lake*, master, Dow Elyea; mate, B. Goodman; engineers, T. L. McLellan and L. G. Mude. M.S. *Hearne Lake*, master, D. Paterson; mate, G. L. Anderson; engineer, G. Watson; M.B. *Canadusa*, master, D. Mahood; engineer, J. A. Mills. M. B. *Weenusk*, master, W. Cowley; engineer, A. Grant.

Saskatchewan District

The winter freighting season recently completed has been one of the most successful Saskatchewan district has known for many years. Practically every pound of freight was landed in perfect condition by the various contractors, and any shortage or damage reported was negligible. Freighting by tractor to Island Lake post was accomplished with some difficulty but brought to a successful completion early in April.

The district manager made a quick trip to Deer Lake post on April 12, visiting God's Lake Mines and Berens River en route.

R. B. Urquhart left Winnipeg on March 15 on a post inspection trip embracing Cumberland House, Pelican Narrows, Stanley, Lac la Ronge, Souris River, Montreal Lake and Green Lake posts. The staffs and residents at most of the posts were recovering from more or less serious bouts of the 'flu, which fortunately did not have the serious results which were experienced on the western section of the district. A severe epidemic of measles struck Lac la Ronge, and at one time over two hundred cases were receiving medical attention. Resulting from the serious outbreak of influenza and measles, Isle a la Crosse and Beauval suffered over seventy deaths amongst the residents at these closely connected settlements, whilst Buffalo River, Clear Lake and Pine River posts also reported many cases having fatal results. In this connection we extend our deepest sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. A. Ahenakew, of Pine River post, in the loss of a son, and to Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Belanger, who mourn the passing of a daughter.

George Cotter, of the depot staff, who has been assisting at Berens River post since early in January, returned to Winnipeg on March 16 and was replaced by D. Davidson, late of Ungava, whom we now welcome to Saskatchewan district.

From reports received recently, William Mitchell, formerly of Montreal Lake post. has recovered very nicely from his long illness and will soon return to duty.

G. C. M. Collins, who was in Winnipeg for about two months receiving medical attention, returned to Norway House post on March 31.

We welcome to Saskatchewan district Miss B. McMeans, replacing Miss I. Barker, who was transferred to F.T.C.O. on April 5. Miss Barker has been on the staff of Saskatchewan district office for the past five years, and we wish her continued success in her new position.

Nelson River District

Through the courtesy of Mr. T. H. Manning, of the British Canadian Arctic Expedition now based at Repulse Bay, Northwest Territories, we received mail this spring from Repulse Bay post, our most northerly mail. Mr. Manning made the trip from Repulse Bay to Chesterfield Inlet alone and once again proved his worth as a seasoned and capable traveller in the Arctic.

We believe that the expedition is preparing to leave Repulse Bay this spring and to separate into two exploration parties. Two members, Messrs. Rowley and Bray, have already left for Igloolik and will probably make contact with the S.S. *Nascopie* at Ponds Inlet this summer.

The material and equipment for our new store has now reached Nelson House, but favourable weather conditions have to be awaited before a start can be made to the building operations. It is our intention to establish at a new site on Poplar Point.

The present itinerary of the M.S. *Fort Severn* calls for voyages to the following points: York Factory, Eskimo Point, Severn, Chesterfield Inlet and Baker Lake, Repulse Bay, Chesterfield Inlet, calling at all intermediate points.

The first voyage is scheduled for July 1, but adverse ice, tidal and weather conditions may cause some slight changes to be made in the present arrangements.

George Anderson reported to Winnipeg on April 5 after spending a short furlough in the Old Country.

Superior-Huron District

M. Cowan, district manager, visited Hudson, Sioux Lookout, Long Lake, Geraldton, Beardmore, Nipigon, Dinorwic and Pagwa River recently. He was accompanied part of the time by H. E. Cooper, of F.T.C.O., and also by J. Glass, of Sioux Lookout.

Work is well under way on the new store at Timagami, H. L. Gomoll, of North Bay, having been given the contract. Construction will be completed in good time for the summer tourist season.

G. Shave is at Pagwa River in charge of scow construction to take care of the English River freight this summer, although it is expected that most of the freighting will be done by canoes manned by English River Indians.

We are glad to report that A. Baulne, of Gogama, who had the misfortune to severely cut his finger, has now returned to duty. G. B. McLeod is also well on the way to recovery, having had to be rushed in by plane from Red Lake for an emergency appendicitis operation.

W. S. Franklin and family of Peterbell post have proceeded on a holiday to the Old Land and no doubt will be witnessing the Coronation. Mr. Franklin will be relieved by H. M. Park transferred from Gogama.

M. Cowan, district manager, has enjoyed a well earned vacation on the Pacific Coast.

The past season has witnessed one of the heaviest falls of snow in the history of Northern Ontario. In spite of this, however, we find that break-up was experienced somewhat earlier than a year ago.

Mrs. A. K. Black has returned from abroad and will be going into Ogoki by first open water.

Visitors to district office have been: J. G. Boyd, Miss Prior, M. S. Cook, who is assisting at Timagami, and A. K. Black, who has left for Ogoki post, to take over from J. Mathieson, who is to come out on furlough. Mrs. A. Hughes, of Osnaburgh. Mr. Briggs, of Beardmore, Ontario, and B. J. Wilson, of Patricia Transportation Company, have also visited district office recently.

We welcome to the district J. G. S. Browett, who has joined the staff at Sioux Lookout.

James Bay District

The weather during the past winter has been exceptional enough to deserve some remarks. On the whole it was a comparatively mild winter, but with numerous storms which did not facilitate winter travel. There were exceptionally heavy snow-falls, and at the beginning of February there was more snow on the ground at Moose Factory than had been seen for the last thirty years. Before February was out we experienced a most exceptional thaw, which carried away the greater part of the heavy snow-fall and in many instances collected water on top of the ice on numerous creeks and rivers. In spite of all these adverse factors, the James Bay mail team was able to accomplish the annual winter trip from Moose Factory to Weenusk and return, and Moose Factory to Great Whale River and return. At Albany connections were made with F. K. Griffin, who came down from Ghost River for the purpose, and at Fort George with J. H. Brown, who came down from Kanaaupscow, and at Great Whale River with R. Cruickshank from Belcher Islands. Naturally the heavy snow-fall did not make for easy travelling for the traders from inland points, and as a direct result of this F. K. Griffin had quite a severe attack of "mal de racquet." J. H. Brown escaped this malady, and while at Fort George he made himself a pair of seven-foot snowshoes, intending to take no chances with deep snow on the return journey to Kanaaupscow. During his stay at Fort George, however, the exceptional February thaw took place and his plans were therefore unavailing. L. C. Bolstead, in charge of the R.C.M.P. detachment at Harrison, made connections with the James Bay team, and took the mail north. Bryce Merrill accompanied the team from Attawapiskat to Kapisko, where he enjoyed a short visit, which was later returned by J. A. Rodgers.

At Weenusk Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Carson were found in the best of health and spirits, while Miss Gordon, who is enjoying her winter stay at Weenusk, plans to return south to Toronto on the M.S. *Repulse* next summer. Apprentice Roy Ross is now a hardy man of the North, having made a winter trip crossing Cape Henrietta Maria to Lake River and returning to Weenusk.

Mrs. J. S. C. Watt, with Jacqueline and Hugo, returned to Rupert's House in March after spending the winter in North Bay. While the mail team was at Rupert's House a winter packet was received from Nemaska, and we learn that Mr. and Mrs. Thompson are in the best of spirits at Nemaska. Mrs. Thompson tells us that if we wish to find the "peace that passeth all understanding" we should spend the winter months at Nemaska. There was no winter packet from Neoskweskau to Rupert's House this winter as, on account of aeroplane freighting, mail was received via Oskelaneo. George Dunn reports a very difficult winter with country food extremely scarce. At Fort George the Reverend T. E. Jones, assisted by his staff, is busily engaged in extensive repair and replacement work at the Anglican mission. As has been previously reported, the church was moved to a new site last summer and repaired. In the coming summer further rebuilding will be undertaken.

During the winter Norman Ross, manager of Great Whale River post, has made several trips to Richmond Gulf, where Apprentice Roy Jeffrey is in charge of the outpost.

At the time of writing Engineer E. G. Cadney is installing a Bolinder Diesel engine in the M.S. *Repulse*, and this vessel will be used for the Weenusk and other freighting in place of the Schooner *Fort George*, which was lost in season 1936. Both the M.K. *Fort Churchill* and M.S. *Repulse* will be operating in the coming season, with Captain J. O. Nielsen and Skipper J. W. Faries in charge. Chief Engineer Cadney will operate on the M.K. *Fort Churchill*, while Erland Vincent will be engineer on the M.S. *Repulse*.

St. Lawrence District

Mrs. A. B. Swaffield made an excellent recovery from her recent serious illness and was able to return home to Manowan post with the new baby before air service ended for the winter.

George S. Fowlie, manager of Pointe Bleue post, visited district office in April on post business and to purchase supplies for spring trade.

Apprentice H. A. Graham recently walked in from Casey to Manowan post. He is now assisting at Oskelaneo post.

J. Thevenet is at present at Grand Lac relieving H. R. Conn, who is visiting Ottawa.

Apprentice J. N. Stevenson, of Pointe Bleue post, underwent a minor operation at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal, and has since returned to duty.

As we write, navigation on the North Shore is opening up. The upper gulf posts again have a regular service, while the S.S. *Sable I* left at the end of April, hoping to reach as far as Mutton Bay if ice conditions prove favourable.

Communication with interior points in the St. Maurice section ended about the middle of April, when air service stopped for the winter.

A. H. Clyne, of Mingan Fur Farms, called on us on his way to the Fur Trade Commissioner's office at Winnipeg.

Our sympathy is extended to Dr. and and Mrs. E. Binet, of Havre St. Pierre, in the loss of their little daughter Renee, and to W. J. and Mrs. Iserhoff, of Mistassinny post, in the death of their daughter Jean.

Miss C. David, of La Sarre post, spent a few days in Montreal during March selecting goods for the women's wear department.

Mrs. J. L. P. Plamondon, of Weymontachingue, is making slow but steady progress towards recovery at Gogama, and we hope she will soon be restored to good health. Mr. Plamondon was granted a short leave of absence to be with his wife, but has now returned to his post.

W. C. Newbury relieved at Oskelaneo while post manager E. J. Haight and family were sick with influenza, and at Weymontachingue during J. L. P. Plamondon's absence. Mr. Newbury is now enjoying a short holiday at Perce, Gaspe, P.Q.

Mrs. H. B. Frankland came out from Obijuan post for a brief vacation at Maniwaki, which was unfortunately spoiled by an attack of influenza. Mrs. Frankland was able, however, to return home before air service ended.

The winter road from St. Felicien, Lake St. John, to Chibougamau, was completed in time to permit of a considerable tonnage being freighted for mining interests before "break-up."

H. Lariviere and staff at Mattice post have had a busy winter in filling a pulpwood contract with the Spruce Falls Power and Paper Company, Kapuskasing. Unusually heavy snow-falls throughout the winter hindered operations, but hauling was successfully completed with the aid of the caterpillar tractor, sleighs and snow plough.

A. E. Briard, former manager of Senneterre post, has retired from the service and sailed for England by the S.S. *Lancastria* on April 30. J. leM. Jandron is at present relieving at Senneterre.

W. Strange and K. M. Retallack, new employees, left recently for Winnipeg to receive a course of instruction at the apprentice school.

The Governor and Deputy Governor were met on their arrival at Montreal by the Chairman of the Canadian Committee, the General Manager and senior members of the Montreal staffs.

Included in our long list of callers since the last issue of *The Beaver* were: Major C. G. Dunn, of Quebec, recently returned from a holiday in the West Indies; W. Chester S. McLure, of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; W. F. Hutchinson, of Job Brothers & Company, Limited, St. John's, Newfoundland; Harvey Bassett, of Associated Screen News, Montreal; A. Pelletier, Maniwaki; Douglas MacKay and J. C. Atkins, of the Canadian Committee office; E. W. Fletcher, Fur Trade controller, on his way to England, and Miss Clarke, of the Mackenzie River Transport Department.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. J. L. P. Plamondon, of Weymontachingue post, on the arrival of a baby boy.

Labrador District

The district manager arrived here on April 6, having spent the winter in Labrador inspecting all posts as far North as Davis Inlet. He returned by plane via Rimouski with a shipment of furs from North West River.

We are now having the M.S. *Fort Garry* put in readiness for the coming season's work. It is expected she will leave on the first voyage to the Southern Labrador posts about May 27, ice conditions permitting.

We have experienced very backward weather and unusual ice conditions this spring. St. John's Harbour has been blocked with Arctic ice on several occasions preventing shipping from entering or leaving the port.

Chesley Russell left by the *Fort Amherst* on April 10 for Halifax, en route to Boston, where he is visiting relatives.

Captain Barbour and Engineer Bradbury called at the office on their way through to Churchill to join the *Fort Severn*.

Visitors to district office recently include Rev. Father O'Brien, missionary to the Labrador Indians, and Major Lee, who is representing certain timber interests located at North West River.

Aviator Simms, of Newfoundland Skyways, is now having his plane overhauled at Quidi Vidi Lake and expects to leave about June 1 for North West River, which place will be used as a base this coming summer for flights to the interior of Labrador in connection with the Labrador Mining & Exploration Company's activities.

S. E. Dawe, late of Nutak post, who is on furlough, paid a visit to district office recently. He will return to duty as manager of Hebron post upon the opening of navigation there.

Eleven members of the S.S. *Nascopie's* crew left here on May 1 to join their ship at Halifax. They include Second Engineer Diamond, Third Engineer Eales, Third Mate Adey and eight deck hands.

Ungava District

The winter mail from Northern Quebec posts arrived at district office early in April. All members of the staff in this section were well and enjoying a successful winter.

William Gibson returned from vacation in Ireland during April and resumed duties at district office.

Apprentice L. F. Hodgson, of Southampton Island post, visited Chesterfield Inlet by dog-team during the latter part of April. He was in touch with district office by radio and succeeded in forwarding the post mail packet, which eventually reached Winnipeg in May.

We regret to record the death, from pneumonia, of Miss Harriett Ford, seventeen-year old daughter of Samuel Ford, manager of Southampton Island post. Our deep sympathy goes out to the bereaved family in their sad and untimely loss.

Messrs. A. B. Fraser, J. Bell, W. G. Calder, G. Webster and W. E. Swaffield are due to arrive in Montreal during the latter part of May, on return from their vacations. They will sail north on the *Nascopie* early in July, and in the meantime take up duties in Montreal in connection with the district.

J. A. Ford and A. Broomfield, both on vacation in Newfoundland, will join the *Nascopie* at Hebron, Labrador. They will reach Hebron from St. John's, Newfoundland, by the M.S. *Fort Garry*.

Arrangements have been completed for the establishment of the new post—to be named Fort Hearne—at Brentford Bay on Boothia Peninsula. This post, which will be situated on the most northerly tip of the mainland of Canada, marks the final link connecting Ungava and Western Arctic districts. Ice conditions permitting, the M.S. *Aklavik*, of Western Arctic district, will meet the R.M.S. *Nascopie* at Brentford Bay and thus establish for the second time ocean contact between the Company's vessels in the most remote area of the Northwest Passage. The first meeting took place during 1930 between the M.S. *Fort James* and the M.S. *Fort Macpherson* at King William Island.

Chesley Russell was a visitor at district office early in May. He has returned to Canada from his vacation in Newfoundland and will take up duties temporarily in Montreal prior to leaving for the North again on board the R.M.S. *Nascopie*.

"Bob and Granny"

(Continued from page 39)

daughter of a Hudson's Bay Company factor whom he had met several years before when she was but sixteen. "Bob" took his bride back to the post at Souris, where, when she saw its condition, so she tells us, she wept. But the resourceful daughter of the North soon made it a home. Mrs. McDermott is worthy of a special chapter in the story of the North. Known as "Granny" to everyone around her, she has lived a long and useful life. The sick and needy, no matter what their race or creed, never appealed in vain to her. Many a man grown old in the service of the Company looks back with gratitude to the day when, as a callow apprentice newly come to a strange and hard land, he was comforted in his loneliness by the quiet spoken Mrs. McDermott. They still treasure the little gifts she made, for "Granny" was one of the best workers in leather, beads and silk in the North.

Mrs. McDermott was born at Peel River, now Fort McPherson, the daughter of John Flett, an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company. At that time the Eskimos trading at Fort McPherson were giving a little trouble and said that they would take two white children away to the North, as some years before white men had taken two Eskimo children away from their parents. Fearing trouble, the Fletts dispersed their family, one child being placed with the Hardistys at Fort Simpson, one boy sent to Prince Albert, and Ellen was sent to Fort Providence to Junior Chief Trader John Reid.

Two years later Mr. Flett took his daughter to Fort Rae, where the resident missionary, afterwards Bishop Reeves, taught her for two years. Then came more schooling at Fort Simpson, where little Ellen lived with the Camsells and acted as nurse-maid to the baby, who is now Doctor Charles Camsell, of Ottawa. Many were Ellen's adventures before she married "Bob" McDermott. At Fort Rae, Fort Simpson, Fort Providence, Fort Liard, she took her place in the work and amusements of the North and developed those qualities which were to stand her in such good stead in later years.

Fond of children and being blessed with a family of their own, the McDermotts adopted a stray Eskimo boy at Lac du Brochet. "Michel" they named him. Being older than the McDermott family and a strict disciplinarian, he saw that the other children became examples of how the younger set should behave.

At Brochet the McDermotts met Bishop Turquettil, Herbert Hall, and many others. At Pelican Narrows he met an old friend, Captain E. B. Haight. He tells an amusing story of this doughty river man. At Cumberland House Chief Factor Horace Belanger and Captain Haight decided to usher in the new year in proper style. One of the old cannons adorning the fort was loaded and, to make certain of plenty of noise, was given an extra "regale." It was too much for the prehistoric weapon. It burst; but the chief factor and the captain could remember but little about it. However, they were extricated from a nearby snowbank alive but black as natives of the Congo.

The McDermotts have lived a happy and useful life, but it has had its shadows. Their eldest son, Lawrence, was killed in action in France. The second son died when just approaching manhood. One daughter living at Fort Smith is married and her children are the pride of their grandparents' hearts, while their other daughter is the superintendent of a large hospital in New York. Not quite so vigorous as of yore, Mrs. McDermott is still busy with good work at Fort Fitzgerald, while "Bob," although the passing years have taken their toll, is still active and in his retirement is ever anxious to help his successor in the Great Company he himself served so long.

May they both long enjoy, in health and happiness, the company of their host of friends.

Salvage by the Midnight Sun

(Continued from page 16)

that we might not be able to get her up. The water was gaining and an awkward wind coming up. A short gin pole was secured and after several attempts the mastheads lifted ten feet. Last time the ship would have taken charge at this point and gone up of her own accord. But now there was too much water in her. A forty-foot gin pole was hastily rigged up. All the heaving down tackle was cast loose and we heaved anxiously to our gin pole. There was a distinct chance for a time that the ship would swing and fall from the gin poles, when undoubtedly the masts would have snapped off and she would have turned turtle and sunk. But our luck held. Up, up she was hoisted on the gin pole, until all of a sudden the hump was passed, the *James* took charge and up she shot, taking gin poles, tackles, and everything with her.

Success at last. It was now 10 a.m. of the following day. We had been on the job twenty-seven hours continuously. There was a lot of water in the ship but, tired as we were, we had to pump it out to satisfy ourselves the leak was stopped. We did. It had. Everyone, greatly relieved, staggered off to bed. The *Fort James* was seaworthy again, and before long was shoving her bow once more into the ice fields.

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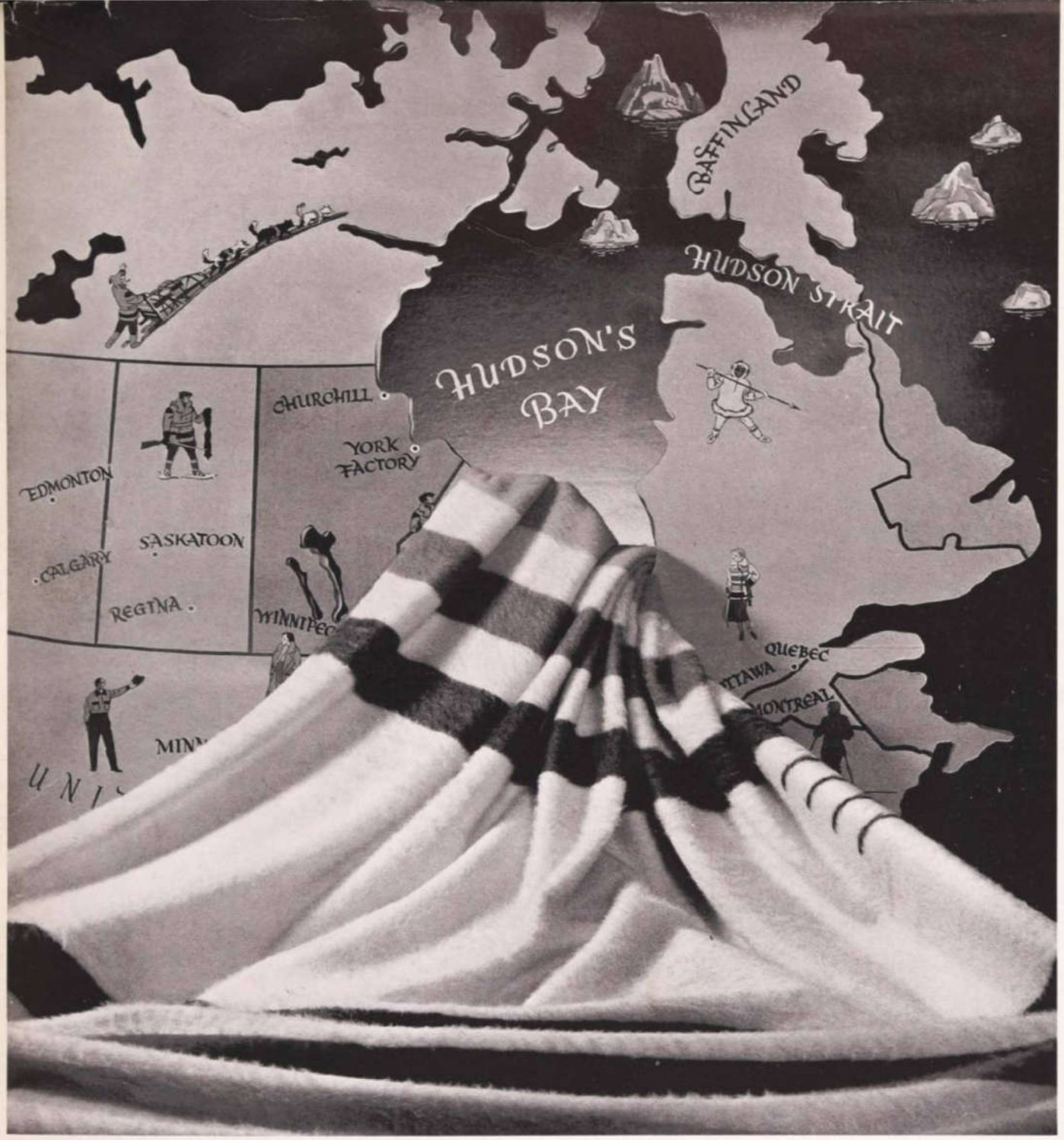

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